

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Appointments and Nominations;
Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Health care, discussion—867
Immigration reform, briefing—863
Islamic Center of Washington, rededication ceremony—865
Presidential Scholars—858
Radio address—856
Rhode Island
Naval War College and a question-and-answer session in Newport—872
Senate's failure to pass immigration reform legislation in Newport—883
White House tee-ball, opening day—869

Appointments and Nominations

Defense Department, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Chairman, remarks—870
Vice Chairman, remarks—870

Communications to Congress

Turkmenistan, letter transmitting a waiver on extension of normal trade relations status—889
Western Balkans, message on continuation of national emergency—855

Communications to Federal Agencies

Assignment of Functions Under Section 1035 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, memorandum—864
Assignment of Reporting Function, memorandum—887
Presidential Determination To Waive Military Coup-Related Provision of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006, as Carried Forward Under the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, With Respect to Pakistan, memorandum—890
Presidential Determination Under Section 402(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974—Turkmenistan, memorandum—889

Executive Orders

Waiver Under the Trade Act of 1974 With Respect to Turkmenistan—889

Letters and Messages

Independence Day, message—890

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

Estonia, President Ilves—857

(Continued on the inside back cover.)

Editor's Note: The President was in Kennebunkport, ME, on June 29, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Contents—Continued

Notices

Continuation of the National Emergency With
Respect to the Western Balkans—855

Proclamations

Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and
Nonimmigrants of Persons Responsible for
Policies and Actions That Threaten
Lebanon's Sovereignty and Democracy—
887

To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the
Generalized System of Preferences, Take
Certain Actions Under the African Growth
and Opportunity Act, and for Other
Purposes—884

Statements by the President

Bald eagle, removal from list of endangered
species—884

Quartet, appointment of Tony Blair as
Representative in the Middle East—870

Supreme Court decision on the Faith-Based
and Community Initiative—862

World Bank, approval of Robert B. Zoellick
as President—862

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—893

Checklist of White House press releases—893

Digest of other White House
announcements—891

Nominations submitted to the Senate—892

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Week Ending Friday, June 29, 2007

**Notice—Continuation of the
National Emergency With Respect to
the Western Balkans**

June 22, 2007

On June 26, 2001, by Executive Order 13219, I declared a national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo. I subsequently amended that order in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003.

Because the actions of persons threatening the peace and international stabilization efforts in the Western Balkans continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, the national emergency declared on June 26, 2001, and the measures adopted on that date and thereafter to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond June 26, 2007. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 22, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,
10:40 a.m., June 22, 2007]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on June 25. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Message to the Congress on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to the
Western Balkans**

June 22, 2007

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2007. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on June 23, 2006, 71 *FR* 36183.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, in Executive Order 13219 and to amendment of that order in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, has not been resolved. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the

United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 22, 2007.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

June 23, 2007

Good morning. This week, Senate leaders introduced revised legislation on comprehensive immigration reform. I thank leaders from both parties for their bipartisan effort to fix our immigration system so it can meet the needs of our Nation in the 21st century.

As the Senate takes up this critical bill, I understand that many Americans have concerns about immigration reform, especially about the Federal Government's ability to secure the border. So this bill puts the enforcement tools in place first. And it means more Border Patrol agents, more fencing, more infrared cameras, and other technologies at the border. It also requires an employee-verification system based on government-issued, tamper-proof identification cards that will help employers ensure that the workers they hire are legal.

Only after these enforcement tools are in place will certain other parts of the bill go into effect. To make sure the government keeps its enforcement commitment, the bill includes \$4.4 billion in immediate additional funding for these border security and worksite enforcement efforts.

The bill also addresses other problems with immigration enforcement. Right now our laws are ineffective and insufficient. For example, crossing the border illegally carries weak penalties. In addition, participation in illegal gangs is not enough to bar admission into our country. And when we cannot get other countries to accept the return of their citizens who are dangerous criminals, in most cases, our Government can only detain these

aliens for 6 months before releasing them into society.

This is unacceptable. The bill before the Senate addresses these problems. Under this bill, those caught crossing illegally will be permanently barred from returning to the United States on a work or tourist visa. Under this bill, anyone known to have taken part in illegal gang activity can be denied admission to our country. And under this bill, we will be able to detain aliens who are dangerous criminals until another country accepts their return.

These enforcement measures are a good start. Yet even with all these steps, we cannot fully secure the border unless we take pressure off the border. Hundreds of thousands of people come here illegally because our current work visa program does not match the needs of a growing and dynamic economy. To discourage people from crossing our border illegally, this bill creates an orderly path for foreign workers to enter our country legally to work on a temporary basis.

With this program in place, employers will have a practical system to fill jobs Americans are not doing and foreign workers will have a legal way to apply for them. As a result, they won't have to try to sneak in. And that will leave border agents free to chase down drug dealers, human traffickers, and terrorists.

Once the border security and worksite enforcement benchmarks are met, the bill will resolve the status of 12 million people who are now in our country illegally. Under this bill, these workers will be given an opportunity to get right with the law. This is not amnesty. There will be penalties for those who come out of the shadows. If they pass a strict background check, pay a fine, hold a job, maintain a clean criminal record, and eventually learn English, they will qualify for and maintain a Z visa. If they want to get a green card, they have to do all these things plus pay an additional fine, go to the back of the line, and return to their country to apply from there.

This bill provides an historic opportunity to uphold America's tradition of welcoming and assimilating immigrants and honoring our heritage as a nation built on the rule of law. We have an obligation to solve problems

that have been piling up for decades. The status quo is unacceptable. We must summon the political courage to move forward with a comprehensive reform bill. By acting now, we can ensure that our laws are respected, that the needs of our economy are met, and that our Nation treats newcomers with dignity and helps them assimilate.

I urge members of both parties to support comprehensive immigration reform. By working together, we can pass this good bill and build an immigration system worthy of our great Nation.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10 a.m. on June 22 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 22 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Toomas Ilves of Estonia

June 25, 2007

President Bush. We'll make statements only today.

Mr. President, welcome. It is a high honor to welcome President Ilves to the Oval Office. He is the President of a country which has emerged from some really dark days. And having been in Estonia, I can report to my fellow citizens that people now see the light of day, they see a better future because of the form of government has changed. President Ilves is a very strong advocate for democracy and the marketplace, and as a result, his country is thriving and doing well. And so we welcome you.

I thank you very much for your voice, heard very clearly, for those who suffer under tyrannical societies, and that is, is that freedom is a precious gift to all and that democracy and societies based upon liberty are the best way to not only enable people to realize their talents but to lay the foundation for peace. And along these lines, Estonia has been a very strong friend to the people of Iraq and Afghanistan. These young democracies are fighting off extremists.

I briefed the President today about my conversation with the Prime Minister of Iraq, as well as our conversations with David Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker. Today, once again, we saw the brutality that extremists can inflict upon societies when a suicider killed innocent people who were working toward reconciliation. All the more reason, Mr. President, for us to remain firm and strong as we stand for this young democracy—these young democracies.

The people of Estonia paid a high price. You lost—I know you lost two soldiers in Afghanistan recently, and our thoughts and prayers go to the families and the people of Estonia. We thank you for your sacrifice and just want you to know that we're committed to working hard to make sure that we succeed, and we succeed for the sake of peace for generations to come.

We talked about a lot of other interesting subjects as well. Of course, the President pushed me very hard on visas. I readily concede there's an inconsistency in our policy where the people of Estonia are treated differently from other people inside Europe, even though the people of Estonia are making great sacrifices for the cause of democracy and liberty alongside with U.S. forces. And to this end, Mr. President, I will continue to pursue with Congress a modernization of the visa program. I thank you for bringing it up, and frankly, I don't blame you for bringing it up.

We also talked about an interesting subject, and one that I can learn a lot about, and that is the cyber attacks that make us all vulnerable. Estonia recently went through a wave of cyber attacks. And this President, one, understands the issue well; two, has got some ideas, including a NATO center of excellence in Estonia to deal with this issue. And I want to—really want to thank you for your leadership, and thank you for your clear understanding of the dangers that that imposes not only on your country but mine and others as well.

But I'm dealing with a man who is a clear thinker. He speaks with moral authority and moral clarity, and he's a voice for reason and hope around the world. And we're proud to welcome you here to the Oval Office.

President Ilves. Thank you very much, President Bush. It is great to be back here, to be in the United States, a strong ally of my country, a country that has been with Estonians throughout the cold war, supporting Estonia's desires for democracy and for independence. And even in the darkest of times and since the reestablishment of our independence, has been with us all along as a very strong partner, strong supporter of our membership in NATO. A country that, whenever things have been tough for us, has stood with us, and it's one reason why Estonia is a strong ally of the United States.

I'm grateful for President Bush's position, which I did push him hard on, on the visa issue. It is something of concern in Estonia, but I think all the other new members of NATO, the ones who are—who have been very good allies in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and our people don't always understand why it is that those people—those countries that have been the strongest supporters of the United States find it often the most difficult to come for vacation. But that—I think that is an issue which is more in the hands of Congress, and we hope that Congress will resolve this.

We did, in fact, suffer a series of attacks on our computer infrastructure. It is a serious issue if your most important computer systems go down in a country like mine, where 97 percent of bank transactions are done on the Internet. When you are a highly interneted country like we are, then these kinds of attacks can do very serious damage. And I do think it's the wave of the future—not that it's a good wave, but it is something that we have to deal with more and more.

We know that the United States and Israel and Denmark have come under cyber attack before, and I think that it's an issue that will require much more attention in the future. And I'm very happy that two countries that are very vast in terms of information technology can work together on these issues.

So I think that—well, for me, it's been—it's a very good visit. And I know that President Bush has a busy schedule, but I do hope that when his term in office is up, that you will come to my ranch, which is a lot smaller than yours. *[Laughter]*

President Bush. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:49 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker.

Remarks to the 2007 Presidential Scholars

June 25, 2007

Welcome to the White House. It's a neat occasion to be able to welcome the 2007 Presidential Scholars. We're glad you're here. I congratulate you on the fine honor, and of course, we wish you all the very best.

The Presidential Scholars program started in 1964. I was a senior in high school—I didn't make it. *[Laughter]* I know all of you worked hard to reach this day. Your families are proud of your effort, and we welcome your family members here. Your teachers are proud of your effort, and we welcome your teachers. And our entire Nation is proud to call you Presidential Scholar.

I'm sorry Laura is not here. She would have loved to have welcomed you. She is off to Africa. And she's there to make sure that people on that continent understand that ours is a nation with a good heart. After all, we're leading the fight against HIV/AIDS and malaria on that continent. And so she is spreading the good will of the American taxpayer by representing our country. In my judgment, there's no finer representative than Laura Bush.

Madam Secretary, thank you for joining us. We're proud you're here—the Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings. I thank the Members of Congress who have joined us: Senator Lieberman, Congressman Buck McKeon, Congressman Dale Kildee, and Congressman Mike Castle. I'm honored you took time, and so are the Presidential Scholars; they're proud you're here.

I want to thank the members of the Presidential Scholars Commission for picking such a fine group of people, and the Presidential Scholars probably want to thank you as well. *[Laughter]* This is a program that honors

high school seniors for exceptional academic and artistic achievements. Past winners have gone on to win the Pulitzer Prize, succeed at the highest levels of business, work here at the White House.

This afternoon we honor a new class of promising young men and women. Your fellow scholars have pursued groundbreaking research, written scholarly papers, and performed at Carnegie Hall. Many of you have also reached out to those in need and have given your time for causes greater than any individual need, and for that, we thank you.

Caterina Yuan shared her passion for service with her classmates at Palo Alto High School in California. She's run food drives, raised thousands of dollars for humanitarian efforts in Africa, and helped organize a school-wide day of service. She's a scholar, but she's also a humanitarian.

Erin Jaeger, from Keene, New Hampshire, helped bring hope and comfort to those living in poverty and hardship. She made three trips to El Salvador to build houses and visit orphanages.

Charlie Bridge from Belmont, Massachusetts, has given back to his community through teaching. He's tutored disadvantaged middle school students, and he plans to continue this important work this summer.

One person not here today is Max Weaver. He's busy preparing for an engagement at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. In a few days he's going to begin an intensive basic training regime that cadets like to call "the Beast." We wish him luck, and we thank him and all the other brave men and women who have volunteered to serve in the United States Armed Forces.

The reason I bring these examples up is that no matter what you do later in life, I encourage you to use your talents to help other people. The true strength of America is the fact that we've got people of good heart and good soul reaching out to people in need. And I thank you for being leaders and setting a good example.

As we celebrate your accomplishments, we also need to honor those who helped you reach this day. You know, I always say that the first teacher of a child is a mom or a dad. For the moms and dads here, congratulations on doing your job. And I thank the

teachers who are here as well. There's no more noble a profession than being a teacher. And I suspect the reason we're honoring Presidential Scholars—or these Presidential Scholars—is because you and their parents set high standards, set a high bar of expectations.

You know, part of the problem we've had in our school system is for too often and too long that bar wasn't set high enough; that we had too many students who were victims of low expectations. I used to call it the soft bigotry of low expectations. Schools just shuffled kids from grade to grade, as if the child couldn't learn to read and write and add and subtract. We never measured; we never had any idea how the child was doing until it was too late. And that was unsatisfactory for the United States of America; it's unsatisfactory for the President; it's unsatisfactory for the future.

And that's why when we came to Washington, we worked with Democrats and Republicans to pass what's called the No Child Left Behind Act. The philosophy behind the law is straightforward. It says the Federal Government should expect results in return for the money it spends. That's not too much to ask, I don't think. If you believe a child can learn to read, then you ought to expect a child to read. That's what you ought to expect. And the only way to determine that is to measure.

I'm sure some of your classmates would say you don't like to take a test. Well, I didn't either. [*Laughter*] But that's too bad because the only way to determine whether a child is reading at grade level is to have accountability in our school systems. And that's the basic strategy of No Child Left Behind. It says, here's some money; we expect you to teach; we want to measure to determine if you are teaching; we look forward to patting you on the back, but if you're not teaching a child the basics, then we expect you to change, before it is too late.

Measuring results helps teachers spot problems. In other words, you can't solve a problem until you diagnose it. It gives teachers tools and schools tools, the key tool necessary to determine whether or not a curriculum needs to change or whether or not a child needs to get special attention.

Measuring results gives parents key information about how their child's school is doing. You know, it's amazing how many parents will say, "The school my child goes to is doing just fine." That's what everybody hopes, and that's what everybody assumes, until scores get posted. It's amazing what happens when you hold people to account. It certainly gets a parent's attention when they find out that their child's school isn't doing as good as the neighborhood's school is, for example, or school next door.

No Child Left Behind is working. In other words, we're making good progress. During the most recent 5-year period on record, 9-year-olds made more progress in reading than in the previous 28 years combined. You can't say that unless you measure. You can't stand up in front of the taxpayers and say, your money is being well spent because we're measuring; we know; we're measuring. Before, it was just—you were just guessing. Now, thanks to No Child Left Behind, there is accountability that's important to be able to report progress to the American people.

Speaking about progress, the nonpartisan Center on Education Policy found that many States have seen reading and math test scores increase since we've passed No Child Left Behind. The study found that minority and low-income students are making some of the biggest gains. And that's positive and important news for the American people.

We had an achievement gap in our country, and it's not right to have an achievement gap in America. And this achievement gap is becoming closed, thanks to hard work by teachers, but also thanks to the fact that we're measuring and correcting problems early, before they're too late.

The No Child Left Behind Act is working, and Congress needs to reauthorize this good piece of legislation. Reauthorizing No Child is one of the top priorities of my administration, and I know it's a top priorities of Members of Congress. Buck McKeon is going to be handling the reauthorization on the Republican side in the House of Representatives, and he is determined to work with people in both sides of the aisle, Dale, to help to get this job done. We made a historic commitment, and I believe we have a moral obligation to keep it.

Our ability to compete in the 21st century depends upon educating children just like the ones standing behind me. Whether we like it or not, we're in a global world. And if the world needs engineers or scientists, and those scientists are being educated in China and India and not being educated in the United States, the jobs of the 21st century are likely to go there. And so we better make sure that we have a strategy aimed at making sure that we have high expectations and good results for every child in the United States, if we expect to remain competitive.

Presidential Scholars, you leave your high school with confidence in your ability, and you've got a great foundation for success. We want to make sure that same confidence is instilled in every single child that's getting out of high school. And so what can we do? First, we can make sure No Child Left Behind gets reauthorized. You cannot compete in a global world unless you're certain that we're achieving certain standards. We want every child reading at grade level by the third grade. And the only way you know whether that's the case is you measure.

And by the way, inherent in No Child Left Behind is a novel idea that said, if a child needs extra help, there's going to be money available to help that child. That's how you make sure that you use the accountability system to achieve results, achieve expectations.

But we need to do more. Our high schools need to have accountability. We want to make sure that same rigor that we've applied in the elementary and middle schools are applied to our high schools. If we want to be competitive, the high school diploma has to mean something. We want to make sure that we expand Advance Placement. I bet most kids here took AP courses, and AP is a great way to raise standards and raise expectations. And we've got to help teachers learn how to teach AP courses as part of our strategy.

We want to make sure that we have a rigorous course of study available for all our kids. We want to make sure we strengthen math and science. And that's why I proposed a program to encourage 30,000 math and science professionals to become part-time teachers. I remember we went to a school in Maryland, Margaret, and there was two guys there that were making science look

cool. I can't do that. Most parents aren't able to do that. [Laughter] But it's amazing what a scientist can do.

And why do we need that? Why do we need 30,000 math and science professionals to go into classrooms to stimulate interest? Because we can't be a competitive nation without more scientists and more mathematicians. Because in order for us to make sure the best jobs are in America requires us having mathematicians and scientists and engineers and physicists. And the best way to stimulate that interest is from people who actually know what they're talking about.

We want to make sure that we work with Congress to have extra funding for underperforming schools. I told you if you measure, we've got extra money for the children; we also got extra money for underperforming schools. And those schools need flexibility. In other words, we've got to have—trust local folks to make the right decisions for local schools. So Margaret is going to work with the school districts and with the Congress to make sure they've got flexibility to use the resources where they're most needed, to tailor reforms to the specific needs of individual schools.

In other words, people say, "Well, you can't be for No Child Left Behind; it's the Federal Government telling you what to do." Quite the opposite. The Federal Government has said, "We believe in local control of schools; you reform them; you fix them." We're just going to insist that you measure, in return for the billions we spend on your behalf.

I proposed an interesting idea that I hope Congress passes, and that is creating a teacher incentive fund of nearly \$200 million for the next year as the beginning—as a downpayment to encourage teachers to teach in districts where they need a little extra help; reward teachers who will go into these school districts that need high expectations. We need people to walk in and say, the status quo is unacceptable, people who show that educational entrepreneurship necessary to make sure every single child gets a good education. And I hope Congress works on that with us.

When schools fail to make progress, No Child Left Behind needs to give parents dif-

ferent options. In other words, you cannot tolerate a system where a child is stuck in a school which will not teach and will not change. There has to be a consequence. We've got remedies in the bill that say, we're going to help schools affect their programs, but ultimately, a parent must be given the ability to transfer their child out to another public school or free tutoring for their children. In other words, there has to be a consequence in order to make sure that there's effectiveness when it comes to reform—schools that need to be reformed. I strongly believe that parents are the frontlines of the decisionmaking and should be empowered—empowered through information and empowered through different options available through the public school system.

We did something else interesting, and I look forward to working with Congress on this—and I must confess, it's slightly controversial—and that is, is that we promoted the first federally funded opportunity scholarship program here in Washington, DC. It basically said to low-income parents that here's some money to help you send your child to a private school or a parochial school, your choice. In other words, it said, if you're tired of being in a system that simply hasn't met expectations, that there ought to be something different, and that I believe that—I think it's the role of government to help low-income parents have different options.

The program is working. It's over-subscribed. I mean, there are thousands of families that have been helped through this Washington, DC, program, which ought to say to policymakers, there's a huge demand for something better. People are sick of mediocrity in the status quo. Obviously, it hasn't happened with these kids, for which we're grateful. But there's still too many schools that just aren't meeting expectations. And so I look forward to working to see if we can't expand this kind of program.

The reason I've asked to speak to you is because I want people to understand how important this No Child Left Behind Act is to America and its future. And we will talk about ways to make the law better. I know some Members and Senators have got concerns about the law, and we're more than willing to talk about flexibility. But there is

no compromise when it comes to setting high standards and measurement. You cannot compromise away the principle of saying, we expect good results, and we're going to measure to determine whether or not we've achieved those results. And when you've achieved the results that we, a society, expect, we'll give you the big embrace. But if not, for the sake of the country, for the sake of kids who deserve better, we expect you to change. That's what we're going to say, loud and clear and often. And it's working; the program is working.

I want to thank Margaret for working hard with Members of Congress. She's engaged, as you know—she's probably wearing you out, Buck—[laughter]—and Dale. But that's good. She's up there working. Laura is all involved too. She's met with a lot of Members of Congress, and she'll stay involved, as will I. This is a very important piece of legislation. We want every child in America to be a Presidential Scholar. We want every child in this country to realize the great potential of America by starting them off with a good, sound education that lets them realize their dreams.

Ours is a fabulous country. We've got kids standing up here who not only are scholars but have volunteered to help a neighbor in need. We've got people who're volunteering to help protect this country. And the thing we've got to do as policymakers is to make sure that we continue to advance America by giving people the tools necessary to realize the great promise of America.

Thanks for coming. God bless you all, and God bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:13 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on the Approval of Robert B. Zoellick as President of the World Bank

June 25, 2007

I welcome the action by the Executive Board of the World Bank to unanimously approve Robert Zoellick as President of the

World Bank. Bob Zoellick is a dynamic leader who is deeply committed to the mission of the World Bank in helping struggling nations to defeat poverty, grow their economies, strengthen transparency and accountability in governance, and offer their people the prospect of a better life. The United States looks forward to continuing our close partnership with the World Bank to achieve these shared goals.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on the Faith-Based and Community Initiative

June 25, 2007

Today's Supreme Court decision marks a substantial victory for efforts by Americans to more effectively aid our neighbors in need of help. The Faith-Based and Community Initiative can remain focused on strengthening America's armies of compassion and expanding their good works. Similar efforts by Governors and mayors in States and cities all across the country can also continue to advance.

From the first days of my administration, we've championed the idea that those in need are better served when government draws on the strengths of every willing community partner—secular and faith-based, large and small. My administration has eliminated regulatory and policy barriers in the Federal agencies, delivered training and development to more than 50,000 social service entrepreneurs, and competitively awarded tens of thousands of Federal grants to faith-based and community organizations for service to others at home and abroad. These efforts fortify America's safety net and expand our Nation's supply of compassion.

This ruling is a win for the thousands of community and faith-based nonprofits all across the country that have partnered with government at all levels to serve their neighbors. Most importantly, it is a win for the many whose lives have been lifted by the caring touch and compassionate hearts of these organizations.

Remarks During a Briefing on Immigration Reform

June 26, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. Thanks for working on an immigration bill that's important for this country. I appreciate your efforts, and I appreciate your time.

I do want to thank Secretary Gutierrez and Secretary Chertoff for their hard work. One of the things I told Members of the Senate was that the administration is going to be involved in crafting a comprehensive bill that's good for the country. And I said, we're going to be more than just giving speeches or using the microphone to proclaim the need for a comprehensive bill. I would send two members plus our staff up to—two members of my Cabinet plus our staff up to work the—to work with the Senators.

And you guys have done a really good job. Thank you for your time. Thanks for your understanding of the complex, carefully crafted piece of legislation that is moving through the Senate. And you've done exactly what I asked you to do; that's why you're in the Cabinet. [*Laughter*] I appreciate you all helping work this bill through the Senate.

The first thing that we've got to recognize in the country is that the system isn't working. The immigration system needs reform. The status quo is unacceptable. Most Americans understand that. They say, "Well, we attempted to reform the system in 1986, and the reform didn't work." Our view is, if the status quo is unacceptable, we need to replace it with something that is acceptable and have been working toward that end with both Democrats and Republicans in the Senate. The reason on the Senate, of course, is that we'll be moving our attention to the House when the Senate passes a comprehensive piece of legislation.

I view this as an historic opportunity for Congress to act, for Congress to replace a system that is not working with one that we believe will work a lot better. In other words, this is a moment for people who have been elected to come together, focus on a problem, and show the American people that we can work together to fix the problem. If you dislike the status quo on immigration, then

you ought to be supporting a comprehensive approach to making sure the system works.

And it's a practical approach. The Senate has worked very hard to craft a comprehensive bill. In a good piece of legislation like this and a difficult piece of legislation like this, one side doesn't get everything they want. It's a careful compromise, and many of you have been involved with that compromise.

The problem that this bill recognizes—the bill recognizes that we got to address the problem in a comprehensive fashion. There are people who say, "Well, we've got to do more to protect our border." And they're right; we do have to do more to protect our border. And that's why this bill has a lot of border security measures that will help continue the strategy that we have been implementing over the past year. As a matter of fact, there's a \$4.4 billion direct deposit on enforcement measures. But it's important for our fellow citizens to understand that in order to enforce the border, there has to be a way for people to come to our country on a temporary basis to do work Americans aren't doing. Otherwise, they will continue to try to sneak in across the border.

And therefore, a second aspect of the comprehensive bill is one that addresses the economic needs of our country, and that is a temporary-worker program that will match foreign workers with jobs Americans aren't doing—and notice I say, "temporary-worker program." There are a lot of employers here in this country that worry about having a workforce that will be able to meet the demands and needs of a growing economy.

There are people who live in our neighborhood and around the world who are desperate to provide food for their families and recognize there are available jobs. And they will do anything to come to our country to work because they want to fight off the poverty and starvation that has affected their loved ones.

It's a powerful incentive to be a mom or a dad to make sure your children don't suffer. That's an incentive. That's an incentive for people here in America; it also happens to be an incentive for people around the world. And therefore, people will be willing to go to extra lengths to avoid border security.

They'll be willing to be crammed in the bottom of 18-wheelers. They fall prey to these *coyotes* who smuggle human beings to achieve profit.

When I say the system hadn't worked, the system hadn't worked to enforce our borders like we want. But the system was—also fostered illegal operations that prey upon the human being, and it's not in this Nation's interest that that continue to happen.

And finally, this bill goes to the heart of our values. We have proven that our Nation is capable of assimilating people. And I'm confident that we can continue to be a nation that assimilates. The bill recognizes that English is a part of the assimilation process and wants to help people learn the language in order to be able to take advantage of America.

You know, I've heard all the rhetoric—you've heard it too—about how this is amnesty. Amnesty means that you've got to [you don't have to] * pay a price for having been here illegally, and this bill does [doesn't do] * that. But it also recognizes it's in our Nation's interest to bring people out of the shadows, that there's got to be a way forward that recognizes there is a penalty for being here illegally—on the other hand, that recognizes that each person has got worth and dignity.

I love a country where people come with dreams and aspirations and through hard work can realize those dreams and aspirations. I'm struck every time I hear—I'm struck about our greatness every time I hear a story about a child taking advantage of a mother's or dad's hard work to realize the blessings of America. I was at the Coast Guard Academy—I've told this story several times—and the number-one cadet talked about his migrant grandfather. The fellow was a Mexican American—or is a Mexican American. The father came from—the grandfather came from Mexico to work hard so that, hopefully, someday, somebody in his family would realize the blessings of America. And it worked.

The country is better off, our soul is constantly renewed, our spirit is invigorated when people come here and realize the blessings of America. And so the bill that

we've worked hard to craft is an important piece of legislation that addresses the needs of a failed system, that says, we're going to change for the better.

I want to thank you all for working hard. We've got a couple of days of hard work ahead of us to get the bill through the first stage of the process, and then, of course, when successful in the Senate, we'll be reconvening to figure out how to get the bill out of the House. It's an important piece of legislation. It's an important time to act for the sake of the country.

Thanks for your time. God bless your efforts. God bless our country. Thank you. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:01 a.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Memorandum on Assignment of Functions Under Section 1035 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007

June 26, 2007

Memorandum for the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Assignment of Functions Under Section 1035 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby assign to the Secretary of Defense the functions of the President under section 1035 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109-364). The Secretary of State, and the heads of other executive departments and agencies identified in the report required under section 1035, should concur with the report.

The Secretary of Defense is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

* White House correction.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:29 a.m., June 29, 2007]

NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on July 2.

Remarks at a Rededication Ceremony at the Islamic Center of Washington

June 27, 2007

The President. Imam, thank you very much. Thank you for inviting me. I bring my personal respect to you, sir.

Imam Abdullah Khouj. Thank you, sir.

The President. And I appreciate your friendship. I do want to thank the governors of the Islamic Center. I welcome the Ambassadors. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate other distinguished guests who are here. It is an honor to join you at this rededication ceremony.

As the Imam mentioned, half a century has passed since one of our great leaders welcomed the Islamic Center into our Nation's family of faith. Dedicating this site, President Dwight D. Eisenhower offered America's hand in friendship to Muslims around the world. He asked that together we commit ourselves "to peaceful progress of all men under one God."

Today, we gather with friendship and respect to reaffirm that pledge and to renew our determination to stand together in the pursuit of freedom and peace. We come to express our appreciation for a faith that has enriched civilization for centuries. We come in celebration of America's diversity of faith and our unity as free people. And we hold in our hearts the ancient wisdom of the great Muslim poet, Rumi: "The lamps are different, but the light is the same."

Moments like this dedication help clarify who Americans are as a people and what we wish for the world. We live in a time when there are questions about America and her intentions. For those who seek a true understanding of our country, they need to look no farther than here. This Muslim center sits quietly down the road from a synagogue, a Lutheran church, a Catholic parish, a Greek Orthodox chapel, a Buddhist temple—each with faithful followers who practice their

deeply held beliefs and live side by side in peace.

This is what freedom offers: societies where people can live and worship as they choose without intimidation, without suspicion, without a knock on the door from the secret police. The freedom of religion is the very first protection offered in America's Bill of Rights. It is a precious freedom. It is a basic compact under which people of faith agree not to impose their spiritual vision on others and, in return, to practice their own beliefs as they see fit. This is the promise of our Constitution and the calling of our conscience and a source of our strength.

The freedom to worship is so central to America's character that we tend to take it personally when that freedom is denied to others. Our country was a leading voice on behalf of the Jewish refuseniks in the Soviet Union. Americans joined in common cause with Catholics and Protestants who prayed in secret behind an Iron Curtain. America has stood with Muslims seeking to freely practice their beliefs in places such as Burma and China.

To underscore America's respect for the Muslim faith here at home, I came to this center 6 days after the 9/11 attacks to denounce incidents of prejudice against Muslim Americans. Today I am announcing a new initiative that will improve mutual understanding and cooperation between America and people in predominately Muslim countries.

I will appoint a special envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference. This is the first time a President has made such an appointment to the OIC. Our special envoy will listen to and learn from representatives from Muslim states and will share with them America's views and values. This is an opportunity for Americans to demonstrate to Muslim communities our interest in respectful dialog and continued friendship.

We have seen that friendship reflected in the outpouring of support Americans have extended to Muslim communities across the globe during times of war and natural disaster. Americans came to the aid of the victims of devastating earthquakes in Pakistan and Iran and responded with urgency and compassion to the wreckage of the tsunami

in Indonesia and Malaysia. Our country defended Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo after the breakup of Yugoslavia. Today, we are rallying the world to confront genocide in Sudan. Americans of all beliefs have undertaken these efforts out of compassion, conviction, and conscience.

The greatest challenge facing people of conscience is to help the forces of moderation win the great struggle against extremism that is now playing out across the broader Middle East. We've seen the expansion of the concept of religious freedom and individual rights in every region of the world—except one. In the Middle East, we have seen instead the rise of a group of extremists who seek to use religion as a path to power and a means of domination.

These self-appointed vanguard—this self-appointed vanguard presumes to speak for Muslims. They do not. They call all Muslims who do not believe in their harsh and hateful ideology “infidels” and “betrayers of the true Muslim faith.” This enemy falsely claims that America is at war with Muslims and the Muslim faith, when in fact it is these radicals who are Islam's true enemy.

They have staged spectacular attacks on Muslim holy sites to divide Muslims and make them fight one another. The majority of the victims of their acts of terror are Muslims. In Afghanistan, they have targeted teachers for beatings and murder. In Iraq, they killed a young boy and then boobytrapped his body so it would explode when his family came to retrieve him. They put children in the backseat of a car so they could pass a security checkpoint and then blew up the car with the children still inside. These enemies bombed a wedding reception in Amman, Jordan, a housing complex in Saudi Arabia, a hotel in Jakarta. They claim to undertake these acts of butchery and mayhem in the name of Allah. Yet this enemy is not the true face of Islam; this enemy is the face of hatred.

Men and women of conscience have a duty to speak out and condemn this murderous movement before it finds its path to power. We must help millions of Muslims as they rescue a proud and historic religion from murderers and beheaders who seek to soil the name of Islam. And in this effort, mod-

erate Muslim leaders have the most powerful and influential voice. We admire and thank those Muslims who have denounced what the Secretary General of the OIC called “radical fringe elements who pretend that they act in the name of Islam.” We must encourage more Muslim leaders to add to their voices, to speak out against radical extremists who infiltrate mosques, to denounce organizations that use the veneer of Islamic belief to support and fund acts of violence, and to reach out to young Muslims—even in our own country and elsewhere in the free world—who believe suicide bombing may someday be justified.

We need to rally the voices of Muslims who can speak most directly to millions in the Arab world left behind in the global movement toward prosperity and freedom. For decades, the free world abandoned Muslims in the Middle East to tyrants and terrorists and hopelessness. This was done in the interests of stability and peace, but instead the approach brought neither. The Middle East became an incubator for terrorism and despair, and the result was an increase in Muslims' hostility to the West. I have invested the heart of my Presidency in helping Muslims fight terrorism and claim their liberty and find their own unique paths to prosperity and peace.

The efforts underway in Afghanistan and Iraq are central in this struggle, but that struggle is not going to end the threats; it's not going to end there. We believe the ultimate success of Afghans and Iraqis will inspire others who want to live in freedom as well. We will work toward a day when a democratic Palestine lives side by side with Israel in peace. We have seen stirrings of a democratic future in other parts of the Middle East, though it will take time for liberty to flower. A democratic future is not a plan imposed by Western nations; it is a future that the people of the region will seize for themselves. A future of freedom is the dream and the desire of every loving heart.

We know this because of the 8 million people who braved threats and intimidation to vote in Afghanistan. We know this because of the nearly 12 million people who cast ballots in free elections in Iraq. And we know

this because the world watched as the citizens of Lebanon raised the banner of the Cedar Revolution, drove out their Syrian occupiers, and chose new leaders under free elections. Even now the hope for freedom is felt in some dark corners in the Middle East, whispering in living rooms and coffee houses and in classrooms. Millions seek a path to the future where they can say what they think, travel where they wish, and worship as they choose. They plead in silence for their liberty, and they hope someone, somewhere will answer.

So today, in this place of free worship, in the heart of a free nation, we say to those who yearn for freedom from Damascus to Tehran, you are not bound forever by your misery. You plead in silence no longer. The free world hears you. You are not alone. America offers you its hand in friendship. We work for the day when we can welcome you into the family of free nations. We pray that you and your children may one day know freedom in all things, including the freedom to love and to worship the Almighty God.

May God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:08 a.m. at the mosque. In his remarks, he referred to Imam Abdullah Khouj, director, the Islamic Center of Washington, DC.

Remarks Following a Discussion on Health Care

June 27, 2007

Good afternoon. Thank you all for being here. I just finished a really interesting and good discussion with a group of distinguished health care experts. I appreciate you all taking your time. Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here as well.

These men and women have different specialties, different backgrounds, and different ideas, but they all agree on an important fact: America's health care system is in need of serious reform. And I agree. The American people share that belief as well. In my conversations with Republicans and Democrats and businessowners and workers, I hear the same concerns: America's health care is too costly; it's too confusing; it leaves too many people uninsured.

The fundamental question is, what should we do about it? On that question, our Nation has a clear choice. One option is to put more power in the hands of government by expanding Federal health care programs and empowering bureaucrats to make medical decisions. The other option is to put more power in the hands of individuals by making private health insurance more affordable and accessible and empowering people and their doctors to make the decisions that are right for them. That's the divide.

Debate between these two options is now beginning to play out on Capitol Hill. Democrat leaders in Congress are considering a massive expansion of government health care through a program called SCHIP, which stands for State Children's Health Insurance Program. This program was designed to ensure that poor children without health insurance receive the medical care they need. I support SCHIP for that purpose. I think it makes sense to have a program to help poor children get the health insurance they need.

My budget increases funding for the poor children in SCHIP. The problem is that Democrats want to expand SCHIP far beyond its original intent. If their proposal becomes law, SCHIP would expand its reach to include children from family that earn as much as \$80,000 a year as well as some adults. This is a massive expansion of the program.

And as a result, many of these people would give up the private health insurance they have now as they move to government health care. In fact, a recent study estimated that as many as half the children enrolling in SCHIP would drop their private health coverage, which is contrary to the program's original purpose.

The Democrats' proposal is part of a larger strategy. At the same time that they try to expand SCHIP to older citizens, they are trying to expand Medicare to younger citizens. Their goal is to take incremental steps down the path to government-run health care for every American. It's the wrong path for our Nation. Government-run health care would deprive Americans of the choice and competition that comes from the private market. It would cause huge increases in government spending, which could lead to higher taxes.

It would result in rationing, inefficiency, and long waiting lines. It would replace the doctor-patient relationship with dependency on people here in Washington, DC.

And there's a better way forward. We strongly believe that the SCHIP proposal put forward by some Democrats in Congress needs to be resisted. And here's what we believe. We believe there's a better alternative. Instead of expanding SCHIP beyond its purpose, we should return its focus to the children most in need. And instead of encouraging people to drop private coverage in favor of government plans, we should work to make basic private health insurance affordable for all Americans.

My administration is pursuing this goal in a variety of innovative ways. We created health savings accounts which allow people to save, tax-free, for routine medical expenses and help reduce the cost of private insurance. We're working to pass association health plans so that small businesses can insure their workers with private coverage at the same discounts that big businesses get. We're working to stop junk lawsuits to drive up private insurance premiums and good doctors out of practice.

The best way to make private insurance more affordable, however, is to reform the Tax Code. Under current law, workers who are fortunate enough to get health insurance from their employers receive a tax benefit. But if you buy insurance on your own, you get no tax benefit.

That's unfair, so I propose leveling the playing field. Under my plan, every family with private health coverage will receive a standard tax deduction of \$15,000. That means families could deduct \$15,000 from their income before they pay taxes, no matter where they get their health insurance. I'm pleased that many health care experts and Members of Congress share the objective for ending a bias in the Tax Code.

Now, I recognize some of them believe a tax credit for health insurance would be a better way to do so. For example, some have proposed a tax credit of \$5,000 for every family with private coverage. This would have a similar outcome as the standard deduction I proposed, and I'm open to further discussions about these two options.

Whichever plan we choose, reforming the Tax Code would have a major impact on American health care. That's what's important for our citizens to understand. There's a better way from expanding the government, and that is to reform the Tax Code. For example, just as tax incentives for homeownership have encouraged more Americans to buy homes through the private housing market, new incentives for health insurance would lead more Americans to buy coverage through the private health insurance market. And that's what we want. That ought to be the goal of this country.

By reforming the Tax Code, it would help more than 100 million people who are now covered by employer-provided insurance reduce their tax bills. Those who now purchase health insurance on their own would save money on their taxes for the first time. And as many as 20 million others who have no health insurance would purchase basic coverage.

While the Federal Government is working to reform the Tax Code, States should address other problems in our health care system. That's precisely what the Secretary is doing, working with our States. States should make reforms to ensure that their citizens have access to basic private health insurance. It's a dual responsibility. If we want a better system, the Federal Government has got a responsibility to reform, and so do States. As they do so, they should ensure that help is provided to those who can least afford coverage.

We're at a decisive moment in the debate over health care. The choices we make now will set the direction of medical care in America for years to come. I'm going to continue to work with members of both parties to look past tired, old proposals that make bigger government programs the solution to every problem. I'm going to continue to push for new and innovative ways to help every American afford basic private health insurance. I will continue to put my trust in the good judgment of the American people, and I'll put my trust in the finest system of private medicine in the world.

I want to thank you all for coming. Thanks for your interest. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:18 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. Participating in the discussion were Secretary of Health and Human Services Michael O. Leavitt; John B. Breaux, senior counsel, Patton Boggs; Stuart M. Butler, vice president of domestic and economic policy studies, Heritage Foundation; Len Nichols, director, health policy program, New America Foundation; C. Eugene Steuerle, senior fellow, the Urban Institute; Grace-Marie Turner, president, the Galen Institute; and Gail Wilensky, senior fellow, Project HOPE.

Remarks at Opening Day of 2007 White House Tee-Ball

June 27, 2007

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to opening day right here on the South Lawn of the White House. Jonas Brothers, thank you guys. It's good to see you. Proud you're here. As usual, you did a fantastic job with the national anthem. Just give them a hand.

I'm proud to be here with the commissioner of tee-ball today, two-time Olympic gold medalist, Michele Smith. Thanks for coming, Michele. Proud to be with you.

First, we want to welcome to tee-ball here on the South Lawn the Bobcats from Allegany County Little League, Cumberland, Maryland. And we want to welcome their mighty opponent from Luray, Virginia, the Red Wings. The commissioner and I wish the girls all the very best. We want to thank the coaches, and of course we want to thank the parents for coming. We welcome you here—opening day of tee-ball on the South Lawn.

I do want to thank the Arizona Wildcat national champs for joining us today. Taryne Mowatt, the coach at first base—Taryne, thanks for coming. Congratulations—Caitlin Lowe, the third base coach. We've got bench coaches; we've got the team. We want to wish you all the very best next year. For—that would be a three-peat, right? Good luck to you all. Thanks for setting such a fine example.

One reason that we invited the Wildcats to come today to honor these girls softball teams is because it's in the Nation's interest to promote women athletics. We're a big believer in Title IX programs. We think it's

good for America that our women are playing sports. And the best way to convince women to play sports is to start early. So these champs are here to encourage these young girls to play hard, play often, and play good, and one day you may be national champs as well. So thanks for coming. We're glad you're here.

I do want to thank Mayor Ralph Dean of Luray. I forgot to welcome you, Mr. Mayor. We're proud you're here. Thanks for coming. We want to thank Girl Scouts of USA for joining us today. Girls, thanks for bearing the colors. We thank you for coming. We're proud you're here. Thanks for being Scouts.

And by the way, we're about to get the first pitch in. And Meredith Cripe is going to give me the ball in a minute. Meredith, we're really glad you're here. Thanks for coming. It's a big day to be here to put out the first pitch on opening day, and we're glad we selected you.

I do want to thank Hannah Storm, the announcer today. Hannah, thanks for lending your talent—mother of three soon-to-be all-star softball players. We're glad you're here. We want to thank the Little League International staff. Thanks for putting on this event. Thanks for supporting Little League baseball. Thanks for helping our kids understand the blessings of exercise and team sports.

I do want to thank representatives from the YWCA, the Boys and Girls Club of America, and Girls on the Run.

And finally, after this event, the commissioner and I are going to present each of you all a token of our appreciation for you coming, and we're also going to say thanks to Erica Minor, who is the youth volunteer. We like to honor people who serve their neighbors, love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves. And Erica is such a person.

And now, before we begin the game and before you give me the ball, Meredith, we're going to have the Little League Pledge. Are you ready? Ready to go? Here we go.

[At this point, the pledge was recited.]

Play ball.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers the Jonas Brothers;

Meredith Cripe, member, Chantilly, Virginia, Little League Challenger League; and Hannah Storm, anchor, CBS News "The Early Show."

Statement on the Appointment of Tony Blair as Quartet Representative in the Middle East

June 27, 2007

Earlier today I spoke with Prime Minister Blair. It has been my pleasure to work with Tony Blair over the last 6½ years. He is not only a friend but is also a visionary leader who has prepared his country to face challenges and opportunities over the horizon. Tony is a man who stands up for his beliefs and has the courage of his convictions. Because of his steadfast resolve in the war on terror, millions of people around the world now enjoy the great rights of freedom and democracy.

I am pleased that this capable man has agreed to continue his work for peace in the Middle East. I welcome the appointment of Tony Blair as the Quartet representative. In his new role, Tony will help Palestinians develop the political and economic institutions they will need for a democratic, sovereign state able to provide for its people and live in peace and security with Israel. I thank him for his willingness to give his time to this goal, which would be a historic step toward peace in the Middle East.

As he leaves the post of Prime Minister and as he undertakes a new role as Quartet representative, the people of the United States of America express our gratitude for his strong friendship and his continued efforts to lay the foundations for freedom in the Middle East.

Remarks on the Nomination of Admiral Michael G. Mullen To Be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General James E. Cartwright To Be Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

June 28, 2007

The President. Good morning. Thank you all for coming. Mr. Secretary, thank you for

joining us. I am sending to the United States Senate my nomination of Admiral Mike Mullen to be America's next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and I'm sending my nomination of General James Cartwright to be the next Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Mike Mullen and Hoss Cartwright are experienced military officers. They're highly qualified for these important positions. I thank them for agreeing to serve their country in these new capacities. We welcome Mike's wife, Deborah, and sons, John and Michael. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for wearing the uniform. Hoss's wife got stuck on an airplane. [Laughter] I'm sure she's going to forgive him—[laughter]—and hopefully forgive me. I thank you all for being here and joining on this—joining these good men on this exciting day for them.

America is at war, and we're at war with brutal enemies who have attacked our Nation and who would pursue nuclear weapons, who would use their control over oil as economic blackmail, and who intend to launch new attacks on our country. In such times, one of the most important decisions a President makes is the appointment of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Chairman is our Nation's highest-ranking military officer. He is the principal military adviser to the President, to the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, and the Homeland Security Council. He is responsible for ensuring that our military forces are ready to meet any challenge.

Admiral Mike Mullen is uniquely qualified to take on these important responsibilities. Mike has had an illustrious military career, spanning nearly four decades. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1968. He earned an advanced degree from the Naval Postgraduate School. He has commanded three ships, a cruiser-destroyer group, and an aircraft carrier battle group. He served as commander of NATO's Joint Forces Command in Naples, Italy, with responsibility for Alliance missions in the Balkans, Iraq, and Mediterranean. He served as commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe.

At the Pentagon, he has served as the Navy's Director of Surface Warfare, Deputy

Chief of Naval Operations for Resources, Requirements, and Assessments, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and Chief of Naval Operations. Mike is a man of experience, of vision, and high integrity. He is the right man to lead America's Armed Forces. And, Mike, I thank you for agreeing to take on this important assignment.

I'm also nominating an outstanding military officer to serve as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Hoss Cartwright. He's a graduate of the University of Iowa. He earned an advanced degree from the Naval War College. He completed a fellowship at MIT. He's a Marine aviator who has commanded deployed marines at all levels. He has broad experience on the Joint Staff, having served twice in the Directorate of Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment.

And since 2004, he's served as head of the U.S. Strategic Command. In that position, Hoss has been in charge of America's nuclear arsenal, missile defenses, space operations, information operations, global command and control, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and our Nation's efforts to combat weapons of mass destruction. These are vital responsibilities, and Hoss has met them with honor, skill, and integrity. He has earned my trust and my confidence. He's going to make an outstanding Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Upon confirmation by the Senate, Mike Mullen and Hoss Cartwright will succeed two of America's finest military officers, General Pete Pace and Admiral Ed Giambastiani. Pete Pace has been at my side most of my Presidency, serving first as my Vice Chairman—as the Vice Chairman and then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We've been through a lot together. Pete was with me after the attacks of September the 11th. He played a key role in planning America's response to that brutal assault on the American homeland.

With the help of his leadership, our men and women in uniform brought down brutal dictatorships in Afghanistan and Iraq. It liberated 50 million people from unspeakable oppression. He's helped lead our military through unprecedented campaigns. And as he has done so, Pete never took his eye off

the horizon and the threats that still lie ahead. He played a critical role in transforming our military for challenges of a new century. He made sure that future benefits—future generations will benefit from the reforms that he has set in motion.

Pete made history as the first marine to serve as Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I'm going to remember him simply as one of the best military officers and finest men I've been privileged to know. I'm grateful for his friendship, his sense of humor, and his character. I also thank him for the life of service, and I thank his wife, Lynne, and his children as well.

I'm also grateful to Admiral Ed Giambastiani. I just call him "Admiral G." I appreciated his outstanding leadership as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. He's an officer of character and vision, and I appreciate his insights and his strong military advice.

Prior to his service as Vice Chairman, Admiral G helped lead the transformation of our military as commander of the U.S. Joint Forces Command. He helped strengthen the NATO Alliance as the first Supreme Allied Commander Transformation. Ed has given 37 years of dedicated service to our country. His work will affect the security of our Nation for decades to come. I thank him for his devotion to duty. I thank his wife, Cindy, and their children as well.

Pete Pace and Ed Giambastiani are hard acts to follow. I can think of none more qualified to follow them than the men whose nominations I am sending to the United States Senate today. I call on the Senate to quickly confirm Mike Mullen and Hoss Cartwright. I thank these fine officers and their families for continuing to serve our country.

Thank you all for coming.

[At this point, Chairman-designate Adm. Mullen and Vice Chairman-designate Gen. Cartwright made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you all. Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:47 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks

of Chairman-designate Adm. Mullen and Vice Chairman-designate Gen. Cartwright.

Remarks at the Naval War College and a Question-and-Answer Session in Newport, Rhode Island

June 28, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks, Governor; appreciate you—go find a nice seat. *[Laughter]* I am really pleased to be among the best and brightest of the United States military. I am pleased to be with many here who represent nations from around the world. Thanks for coming by. *[Laughter]* Those who go to school here are at a great place. We actually have some things in common. We went to school in New England. *[Laughter]* We pursued advanced degrees. And we compiled outstanding academic records—*[laughter]*—well, two out of three. *[Laughter]*

The Naval War College is where the United States military does some of its finest thinking. You help the Navy define its mission. You support its combat readiness. You strengthen our maritime security cooperation with other countries. You train our officers to think strategically. And that's important. The United States Navy is one of the most professional and advanced navies in—the world has ever seen, and the men and women of the Naval War College are working to keep it that way, and I appreciate your work.

More than a century ago, the president of this college wrote a book called “The Influence of Sea Power Upon History.” The book was read by Theodore Roosevelt. It affected American strategic thinking for decades to come. Now we're in a new and unprecedented war against violent Islamic extremists. This is an ideological conflict we face against murderers and killers who try to impose their will. These are the people that attacked us on September the 11th and killed nearly 3,000 people. The stakes are high, and once again, we have to change our strategic thinking.

The major battleground in this war is Iraq. And this morning I'm going to give you an update on the strategy we're pursuing in

Iraq. I'll outline some of the indicators that will tell us if we're succeeding. And I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and visit with you.

I appreciate the Governor of this great State and his wife, Sue. I'm proud to call you friend, and thank you very much for your thoughtfulness today. The Governor gave me a helicopter tour of this beautiful part of the world. The tall ships were magnificent.

Rear Admiral Shuford and his wife, Cathy, thanks, as well, for being in the military; thanks for leading; and thanks for inviting me here. I appreciate Rear Admiral Tom Eccles, commander, Naval Undersea Warfare Center. I thank my friends, Governors who have joined us: Governor Jodi Rell, Governor Mark Sanford, Governor Matt Blunt. One day we'll all be members of the ex-Governors club. *[Laughter]* Later, rather than sooner, in your case. *[Laughter]* I appreciate all the other State and local officials, the students here, the faculty here, and the alumni here. Thanks for coming.

Earlier this year, I laid out a new strategy for Iraq. I wasn't pleased with what was taking place on the ground. I didn't approve of what I was seeing. And so I called together our military and said, can we design a different strategy to succeed? And I accepted their recommendations. And this new strategy is different from the one we were pursuing before. It is being led by a new commander, General David Petraeus, and a new ambassador, Ryan Crocker. It recognizes that our top priority must be to help the Iraqi Government and its security forces protect their population from attack, especially in Baghdad, the capital. It's a new mission. And David Petraeus is in Iraq carrying it out. Its goal is to help the Iraqis make progress toward reconciliation, to build a free nation that respects the rights of its people, upholds the rule of law, and is an ally against the extremists in this war.

And it's in our interests, it's in our national interests to help them succeed. America has sent reinforcements to help the Iraqis secure their population. In other words, one of the decisions I had to make was, what should our troop levels be? I asked the military what they thought the troop levels ought to be.

That's what you expect from your Commander in Chief, to consult closely with the United States military in times of war. They made recommendations, and I sent the reinforcements in to help the Iraqis secure their population, to go after terrorists, insurgents, and militias that incite sectarian violence, and to help get this capital of Iraq under control.

The last of the reinforcements arrived in Iraq earlier this month, and the full surge has begun. One of our top commanders, Ray Odierno, puts it this way: "We are beyond a surge of forces, and we're now into a surge of operations." Today I am going to give you an update on how these operations are proceeding. I'll talk about the progress and challenges regarding reconciliation at both the national and local levels. And I'm going to outline some of the criterion we will be using to tell us if we are succeeding.

Let me begin with Anbar Province. You can see here on the map, Anbar is a largely Sunni Province that accounts for nearly a third of Iraqi territory. It's a big place. Anbar stretches from the outskirts of Baghdad to Iraq's borders with Jordan and Syria. It was Al Qaida's chief base of operations in Iraq. Remember, when I mention Al Qaida, they're the ones who attacked the United States of America and killed nearly 3,000 people on September the 11th, 2001. They're part of the enemy. They're extremists and radicals who try to impose their view on the world.

According to a captured document—in other words, according to something that we captured from Al Qaida—they had hoped to set up its—a government in Anbar. And that would have brought them closer to their stated objective of taking down Iraq's democracy, building a radical Islamic empire, and having a safe haven from which to launch attacks on Americans at home and abroad. This is what the enemy said. And I think it is vital that the United States of America listen closely to what the enemy says.

Last September, Anbar was all over the news. It was held up as an example of America's failure in Iraq. The papers cited a leaked intelligence report that was pessimistic about our prospects there. One columnist summed it up this way: "The war is over in Anbar Province, and the United States lost."

About the same time some folks were writing off Anbar, our troops were methodically clearing Anbar's capital city of Ramadi of terrorists and winning the trust of the local population. In parallel with these efforts, a group of tribal sheiks launched a movement called "The Awakening" and began cooperating with American and Iraqi forces. These sheiks, these leaders were tired of murder and tired of mayhem that Al Qaida had brought to their towns and communities. They knew exactly who these folks were.

To capitalize on the opportunity, I sent more marines into Anbar. And gradually, they have been helping the locals take back their Province from Al Qaida.

These operations are showing good results. Our forces are going into parts of Anbar where they couldn't operate before. With the help of Iraqi and coalition forces, local Sunni tribes have driven Al Qaida from most of Ramadi. Attacks there are now down to a 2-year low. Recruiting of Iraqi police forces now draws thousands of candidates, compared to a few hundred just a few months ago. This month, Anbar opened its first police academy. And as the slide shows, overall attacks in Anbar are sharply down from this time last year.

Despite successes, Anbar Province remains a dangerous place. Why? Because Al Qaida wants their base of operations back; it's working to assassinate sheiks and intimidate the local population. We've got to prepare ourselves for more violence and more setbacks. But a Province that had been written off as hopeless now enjoys a level of peace and stability that was unimaginable only a few months ago.

We are hoping to replicate the success we have had in Anbar in other parts of Iraq, especially in areas in and around Baghdad. In the months since I announced our new strategy, we have had—we've been moving reinforcements into key Baghdad neighborhoods and the areas around the capital to help secure the population. I told you what the mission was, and that's what we're doing. Now we have launched a wider offensive called Operation Phantom Thunder, which is taking the fight to the enemy in the capital as well as its surrounding regions. This operation focuses on defeating Al Qaida terrorists, the

insurgents, and militias, denying the extremists safe havens, and breaking up their logistics, supply, and communications.

This map shows Baghdad and its surrounding areas. In January, I explained that 80 percent of Iraq's sectarian violence occurs within 30 miles of the capital. Although some of the violence that plagues Baghdad is homegrown, a good part of it originates from terrorists operating in the surrounding areas. If we can clear these strongholds of Al Qaida and death squads, we can improve life for the citizens of the areas and inhibit the enemy's ability to strike within the capital. And this is what Phantom Thunder is designed to do.

I am going to describe some of the operations that are unfolding in different areas around the capital.

To the north of Baghdad, our forces have surged into Diyala Province. The primary focus is the Provincial capital of Baqubah, which is just an hour's car ride from Baghdad. There, masked gunmen enforce their brutal rule with prisons and torture chambers and punish crimes like smoking.

In one building, our forces discovered a medical facility for the terrorists that tells us the enemy was preparing itself for a sustained and deadly fight. They had burrowed in. There was no resistance. They were trying to export their violence to the capital. Iraqi and American troops are now fighting block by block. The colonel leading the assault says, "We have denied Al Qaida a major bastion." The city is cleared. The challenge, of course, is going to be for coalition and Iraqi forces to keep it that way. But we're making progress in Operation Phantom Thunder.

To the southeast of Baghdad, we are going after Al Qaida in safe havens they established along the Tigris River. These safe havens include areas like Salman Pak and Arab Jabour—areas well known for sending car bombs and truck bombs into Baghdad. Extremists in many of these areas are being confronted by U.S. and Iraqi forces for the first time in 3 years. We can expect determined resistance. They don't like to be confronted. But General Petraeus says, "In order to accomplish the mission, we're going to confront them with the finest military ever assembled on the face of the Earth." That's the U.S.

military. Our forces are determined, and we're going to take those safe havens away from Al Qaida and the extremists.

To the west and northwest of Baghdad, Operation Phantom Thunder is going after Al Qaida's remaining outposts in Anbar. We're taking the fight to areas around Karmah; it's a known transit point for Al Qaida fighters. One example of what we are now seeing—U.S. and Iraqi forces in Fallujah seized 25,000 gallons of nitric acid, a critical ingredient for car bombs and truck bombs. The deputy commander of U.S. forces west of Baghdad says, "We have largely succeeded in driving the terrorists out of Anbar's population centers." He says, "The surge has given us the troops we needed to really clear up those areas, so we cleared them, and we stayed."

Within Baghdad itself, the surge of forces has allowed us to establish a presence in areas where the terrorists and insurgents had embedded themselves among the people. In the past 2 weeks alone, our troops in Baghdad have captured five militia cells. Some of the names you will be hearing in the next few months will include places like Adamiyah, Rashid, and Mansour. These areas are important because they represent so-called sectarian faultlines—locations where Shi'a extremists and Al Qaida terrorists are attempting to reignite sectarian violence through murder and kidnappings and other violent activities. Until these areas and others like them are secured, the people of Baghdad can't be protected; they can't go about their lives.

Right now, we're at the beginning stage of the offensive. We finally got the troops there. Americans have got to understand, it takes awhile to mobilize additional troops and move them from the United States to Iraq. And we got them there. And now we're beginning to move. And there are hopeful signs. Last week, our commanders reported the killing of two senior Al Qaida leaders north of Baghdad—one who operated a cell that helped move foreign fighters into Iraq and another who served as a courier for the same cell.

Within Baghdad, our military reports that despite an upward trend in May, sectarian

murders in the capital are now down substantially from what they were in January. We are finding arms caches at more than three times the rate a year ago. Although the enemy continues to carry out sensational attacks, the number of car bombings and suicide attacks has been down in May and June. And because U.S. and Iraqi forces are living among the people they secure, many Iraqis are now coming forward with information on where the terrorists are hiding.

On the ground, our forces can see the difference the surge is making. General Petraeus recently described what he called “astounding signs of normalcy.” He said that about Baghdad. He talks about professional soccer leagues and amusement parks and vibrant markets. In the mixed Shi’a-Sunni neighborhood of Rashid, our foot patrols discovered a wall with two Arabic sentences spray-painted on them. It’s just a small example. It certainly didn’t get any news, but it says, “Yes, yes to the new security plan. No difference between Shi’a and Sunni.”

The fight’s been tough. It’s a tough fight, and it is going to remain difficult. We’ve lost some good men and women. And even as our troops are showing some success in cornering and trapping Al Qaida, they face a lot of challenges. After all, the people of Iraq lived for decades under the brutal dictatorship that bred distrust. And so there’s still sectarian tensions. The feelings are being exploited, and they’re being manipulated by outsiders. Iran, for example, continues to supply deadly IED explosives that are being used against American forces. It is also providing training in Iran as well as funding and weapons for Iraqi militias. Meanwhile, Syria continues to be a transit station for Al Qaida and other foreign fighters on their way to Iraq.

Influx of foreign fighters and foreign support makes this job a lot tougher—tougher on the Iraqis, tougher on our troops. We can expect more casualties as our forces enter enemy strongholds and push back against foreign interference. But General Petraeus and our commanders in Iraq have carefully laid out a plan that our forces are executing on the ground. It’s a well-conceived plan by smart military people, and we owe them the

time and we owe them the support they need to succeed.

I fully agree with the military that says this is more than a military operation. Have to be making tough decisions—the Iraqis have got to be making tough decisions towards reconciliation. And that’s why I will keep the pressure on Iraqi leaders to meet political benchmarks they laid out for themselves. Now, at home, most of the attention has focused on important pieces of legislation that the Iraqi Parliament must pass to foster political reconciliation, including laws to share oil revenues, hold Provincial elections, and bring more people into the political process. I speak to the Prime Minister and I speak to the Presidency Council quite often, and I remind them we expect the Government to function and to pass law.

Many Americans have been frustrated by the slow pace of legislation, as have I. However, I think we ought to put the challenge into perspective. In a democracy, the head of government just can’t decree the outcome. [Laughter] I’m not saying that’s what I’d like to do. [Laughter] Some in Washington are suggesting that’s what I’d like to do. The Iraqi Parliament is composed of members representing many different religions and ethnicities: Sunnis, Shi’a, Turkoman, Kurds, and others.

Even in a long-established democracy, it’s not easy to pass important pieces of legislation in a short period of time. We’re asking the Iraqis to accomplish all these things at a time when their country is being attacked. I make no excuses; we will continue to keep the pressure up. We expect there to be reconciliation. We expect them to pass law.

On the benchmarks not related to legislation, they’re doing better. Prime Minister Maliki promised to provide three brigades to support the operations in Baghdad, and he did. Iraqi leaders promised to give military commanders the authority they need to carry out our plans, and for the most part, they have. In addition, Iraqis have helped reduce sectarian violence and established joint security stations. The Iraqi Ministry of Defense is working hard to improve its logistical capabilities. It’s going to spend nearly \$2 billion

of its own funds this year to equip and modernize its forces. The Iraqi Government appropriated \$2 billion so their force can become more modern, so their force is more ready to take the fight to the enemy.

With the help of our troops, the Iraqi security forces are growing in number, they are becoming more capable, and coming closer to the day when they can assume responsibility for defending their own country. Not all this progress is even, and we're going to keep pressing the Iraqis to keep their commitments. Yet we must keep in mind that these benchmarks are aimed at improving life for the Iraqi people, and that is the standard by which they should be judged.

To evaluate how life is improving for the Iraqis, we cannot look at the country only from the top down. We need to go beyond the Green Zone and look at Iraq from bottom up. This is where political reconciliation matters the most because it is where ordinary Iraqis are deciding whether to support new Iraq or to sit on the fence, uncertain about the country's future. I'm encouraged and, more importantly, the people in Baghdad are encouraged by what we're seeing. Citizens are forming neighborhood watch groups. Young Sunnis are signing up for the army and police. Tribal sheiks are joining the fight against Al Qaida. Many Shi'a are rejecting the militias.

Much progress we are seeing is the result of the work of our Provincial Reconstruction Teams. These teams bring together military and civilian experts to help local Iraqi communities pursue reconciliation, strengthen moderates, and speed the transition to Iraqi self-reliance. PRTs in Anbar are working with Iraqi judges to restore the rule of law with new trials for terrorist detainees. The PRT in Ramadi helped the Provincial council pass a budget that appropriates more than \$100 million for capital expenditures so people can begin rebuilding their Province and people can find work. PRT in Kirkuk is extending microloans to finance reconstruction and help stimulate job creation. The PRT in Ninewah has created more than 1,000 jobs through infrastructure projects that range from renovating a hospital to paving roads to building a new soccer field.

This bottom-up approach to reconciliation and reconstruction is not headline-grabbing. You don't read a lot about it, but it is making a difference in the lives of Iraqi citizens. It's ongoing, and we need to make sure it continues.

We are also encouraged by the way Iraqis are responding to atrocities intended to inflame passions and provoke reprisals. In early 2006—things were going fine in 2005. You might remember, at the end, we had an election where 12 million people showed up, an astonishing moment for the Middle East. And I, frankly, wasn't surprised because I believe in the universality of freedom. I believe everybody wants to be free. That's what I believe.

I wasn't surprised, but I was pleased. I was pleased to hear the stories of Iraqis who got to vote and their joy in voting. Al Qaida wasn't pleased. As a matter of fact, they were frightened by the advance of democracy. You see, democracy is the opposite of their ideology. These folks believe something; it's just the opposite of what we believe. I remind people, one of the great, precious gifts of America is the right for people to worship or not worship and be equally American; that we're all Americans—that we're all Americans together, whether you're a Christian, Jew, Muslim, or don't believe. It's the opposite of what Al Qaida believes. They believe if you don't worship the way they tell you to, they're likely going to kill you.

And so they didn't like the advance of democracy in 2005. And so in early 2006, they blew up the Golden Mosque in Samarra. It's one of Shi'a Islam's holiest sites. It set off a spiral of sectarian killing. Earlier this month, in an attack that had all the hallmarks of Al Qaida, the terrorists went back to their old playbook and blew up the minarets on the same mosque.

This time, Iraqi leaders united immediately in rejecting the attack. They took swift and aggressive actions to prevent a rerun of last year's violence. Prime Minister Maliki imposed a curfew, ordered additional security for holy places, and convened a meeting of Sunni, Shi'a, and Kurdish leadership. He traveled to Samarra with his Defense and Interior Ministers to demonstrate their commitment to peace and reconciliation. Now,

look, there are still some reprisals that have occurred, and it's too early to judge whether the Government's efforts will be enough to prevent a spiral of violence that we saw after last year's attacks. But it is not too early to say that the response by the Iraqi leadership has been impressive and very different from what it was the last time around.

One reason it is different is that the Iraqis are beginning to understand that Al Qaida is the main enemy for Shi'a, Sunni, and Kurds alike. Al Qaida is responsible for the most sensational killings in Iraq. They're responsible for the sensational killing on U.S. soil, and they're responsible for the sensational killings in Iraq. Here at home, we see the bloody aftermath of a suicide bombing in an Iraqi market, and we wonder what kind of people would do that. That's what we wonder. We're good-hearted people. Our commanders tell me that 80 to 90 percent of these suicide bombings are the work of foreign fighters, people who don't like the advance of an alternative to their ideology, and they come in and murder the innocent to achieve their objective.

And that's their strategy. Al Qaida's strategy is to use human beings as bombs to create grisly images for the world to see. They understand that sensational images are the best way to overwhelm the quiet progress on the ground. They aim to cultivate a sense of despair about the future of a free Iraq. They hope to gain by the television screen what they cannot gain on the battlefield against U.S. and Iraqi forces.

Our success in Iraq must not be measured by the enemy's ability to get a car bombing into the evening news. No matter how good the security, terrorists will always be able to explode a bomb on a crowded street. In places like Israel, terrorists have taken innocent human life for years in similar attacks. The difference is that Israel is a functioning democracy that is not prevented from carrying out its responsibilities. And that's a good indicator of success that we're looking for in Iraq: the rise of a government that can protect its people, deliver basic services for all its citizens, and function as a democracy even amid violence.

We're involved in a broader war against these ideological killers. Iraq is just a theater

in this war. The extremists understand this, that if the Middle East knows—if the Middle East know that if the Iraqis succeed, it's going to be a terrible blow to their ambitions. That's what they see. But they also feel the same way about Afghanistan, where the Taliban, one-time allies of Al Qaida, is trying to murder its way back into power; or in Lebanon, where extremists are trying to bring down that nation's democratic Government; or in the Palestinian Territories, where terrorists have set off a suicidal war; or in Iran, where the Government pursues nuclear weapons while its President declares that Israel must be wiped off the map.

The stakes are high in the beginning stages of this global war against ideologues that stand for the exact opposite of what America stands for. And what makes the war even more significant is that what happens overseas matters to the security in the United States of America, as we learned on September the 11th, when killers were able to use a failed state to plot the deadly attack. And so if we withdraw before the Iraqi Government can defend itself, we would yield the future of Iraq to terrorists like Al Qaida, and we would give a green light to extremists all throughout a troubled region.

The consequences for America and the Middle East would be disastrous. In Iraq, sectarian violence would multiply on a horrific scale. Fighting could engulf the entire region in chaos. We would soon face a Middle East dominated by Islamic extremists who would pursue nuclear weapons, who would use their control of oil for economic blackmail, and who would be in a position to launch new attacks on the United States of America. September the 11th, we saw how a failed state, like I'd just told you, can affect the security at home. And so for the sake of our own security, for the sake of the security of the United States of America, the United States must stand with millions of moms and dads throughout the Middle East who want a future of dignity and peace, and we must help them defeat a common enemy.

No one understands that better than the men and women in uniform. It is a huge honor to be the Commander in Chief of such a noble group of men and women. Our military is not only great; it's good. Good-hearted

people, all volunteers, who said, "I want to serve in the face of danger." It's a remarkable country that can produce such good men and women.

I think of a fellow named Cory Endlich. Cory was an Ohio boy. He wanted to join the Army so badly that his dad let him start training his senior year of high school. He was deployed to Iraq. It tells you something about his character that when his mom asked him if he needed anything, he said the only things he asked for—she said the only things he asked for were coloring books, crayons, and candy for the Iraqi children he had befriended. Earlier this month, he was killed. Here's what his dad said: "He felt the war was justified and wanted to be there." That's what his dad said. "I am proud of him and the job he is doing." And so am I. *[Applause]* Thank you. Thank you all.

I know you will join me in asking a loving God to hold the families of those who have lost a loved one in His loving hand. We resolve to honor their sacrifice by finishing the work they have begun. That's the task ahead of us. And when we do, we'll see a true legacy of a man like Sergeant Endlich: a dawn of a Middle East where leaders are at peace with their own people, where children enjoy the opportunities their parents only dreamed of, and where America has new allies in the cause of freedom.

Thanks for letting me come today. God bless your work, and God bless our country. *[Applause]*

Thank you all. Thank you. Be seated. I've enjoyed my stay so much, I thought I might answer some questions—*[laughter]*—if you've got any, particularly from the students who might be curious. Yes, sir. You're the guy. Are you the mike-man, or are you the questioner? Well, you're the questioner. Mike-man, okay. *[Laughter]* Yes, sir.

Role of U.S. Navy/War on Terror

Q. Mr. President, it was my great privilege to be a representative of the Royal Navy here at the Naval Command College class of 1994. It's a huge privilege, clearly, to be here today as well. We support and admire your country's commitment and sacrifice in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world in the war on terror. But it strikes me that what you

described today is very much a land-orientated campaign. What, if any, impact is that land campaign focus likely to have on your propensity to invest in a maritime strategy in the future, please?

The President. Yes, thanks. Yes. *[Laughter]* Now, who exactly invited you here? No. *[Laughter]* I think the—thank you, sir. No, never mind; just kidding. *[Laughter]* It is a land-based campaign because that's where the enemy is. They hide in caves, and they hide in remote regions, and they try to destabilize countries. They try to create chaos. You've got to understand, chaos is the friend of these radicals. The more chaos there is, the more likely it is they'll be able to find a place to roost.

And I know people—some people in our country just have trouble believing that they want to strike us again, but they do. That's what I live with every day. That's what Presidents do; they think about the threats, and they deal with them. And my attitude has been, let's keep the pressure on them. And the Nation is going to have to do that. We're going to have to continually press. This means good intelligence, good special ops, working with allies like Great Britain, who have been a fantastic country to work with, by the way—and just got to pressure them. It's hard to plan and plot when you're on the move. And it takes a lot of work. It takes a lot of diplomacy; it takes a lot of military action; it takes a lot of good intel; and it's going to take a lot of determination by the United States.

In the meantime, we're going through a transformation of our forces. And one of the most transformative branches has been the Navy. It's amazing how the Navy has been able to accomplish more with less. Perhaps that's what you've been able to—that's less manpower, more mission, better use of equipment, the capacity to manage manpower better. No question, we're increasing our Army and Marines, which some claim is part of the Navy—*[laughter]*—he doesn't claim it, yes. *[Laughter]* Well, we're not going there. *[Laughter]*

But our Navy is modern, and we'll keep it that way. And it's—the main thing for militaries as we head into the 21st century is, constantly adjust to meet threat. And we've

got a lot of money in our budget, and I hope that this new Congress keeps it that way for the Navy, as well as the rest of the military. It's really important. And it's important we continue to transform and become more interoperable. And that's really the challenge I presume you're studying this year at the university. Part of the strategic thought for our military is interoperability. And we're becoming much better at it, at least that's what the commanders tell me. And that's important.

By the way, named a Navy man today, sent his name up to the Senate for confirmation as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mullen, and Vice Chairman is going to be a marine named Hoss Cartwright. They understand the need to continue to wage this war and also to transform our military to meet the threats of the 21st century. And we're doing it.

One of the major transformative events we have done is, we have begun to reposition our troops in Europe. The cold war is over; it ended. And therefore, the troop posture doesn't need to be the way it has been throughout the fifties, sixties, and seventies. That's transformative. That also frees up money for capital investment as well as different places where—let me just say, the capacity to base out of home is going to save us a lot of money and save you a lot of wear and tear.

The Volunteer Army only works well if we take care of the wives and husbands, the spouses. And one way to do that is to reposition our forces to meet the threats of the 21st century. Well, it turns out, in many times—it means they have to be based here and be, then, in a capacity to move quickly to deal with the threats.

Anyway, thanks; good question. Great Britain has been a great ally. I said goodbye to my friend, Tony Blair, yesterday. I said hello to the new Prime Minister, Gordon Brown. And there's no doubt in my mind, we'll continue to have a good, close working relationship for the sake of peace, for doing the hard work necessary to make this world a peaceful place.

Surely there's more questions than that. [Laughter]

Yes, ma'am.

President's Decisionmaking

Q. Mr. President, I just returned from a week at the United States Army War College in Pennsylvania on national security. I walked away with so much more pride in our military. I would follow them anywhere. My question is: At the beginning of your speech—that you said that you consult with the military. With all due respect, sir, how much do you really listen and follow them?

The President. Yes, a lot. I don't see how you can be the Commander in Chief of a well-motivated military without listening carefully to the advice of your commanders. I talk to General Petraeus all the time. I say, "all the time"—weekly; that's all the time—[laughter]—on secure video from Baghdad. There's a lot of discussions about troop positioning, what will our footprint look like.

My answer is, it depends on what David Petraeus says. David Petraeus is the commander on the ground, and he'll have the full support. And that's the way I do business. It's the way it's been throughout the—you know, I told you that, and rightly so, that—look, I had a decision to make: more troops to secure Baghdad and Anbar, or pull back and hope for the best? I made a decision to put more troops in. That was in close consultation with the Pentagon and, in particular, with the—you know, the folks who have been charged with the operations in Baghdad. And that's what you expect from the Commander in Chief.

We do have a chain of command. It goes from me to Gates to Fox Fallon to Petraeus. But a lot of times—and we're all on the SVTS together—the secure video together to talk about matters and—so that's the way we do it, yes. Thanks for the question.

Yes, sir.

U.S. Military's Ability to Confront Multiple Conflicts

Q. Thank you very much. Our family was touched by 9/11, and I want to thank you very much for the support of the 9/11 families. Peter Dutton is my name. I'm from the Naval War College faculty. I wanted to ask you about your thoughts concerning strategic culmination. Are we—

The President. Strategic—

Q. Strategic culmination. In other words, are we getting to the point where we're unable to continue to affect world events in other areas other than the Middle East because of our huge commitment there to the Middle East?

The President. No, I appreciate that. Obviously, we're constantly balancing—the first mission is, succeed in Iraq; let me just put it to you that way. And—yes, I think we are. I think we're capable of dealing with more than one event at a time. Witness the fact that we've got a lot of troops in Afghanistan. Fortunately, we've got a lot of NATO allies with us in Afghanistan. One of the things that I don't think a lot of people have really figured out is how successful we've been about putting—about our ability to put coalitions together. There are a lot of troops in Iraq other than our own, and there's a lot of troops in Afghanistan other than our own.

The other hotspots, of course, would be the Far East. And we've got a significant military presence there. We hope and pray that diplomacy works—I think it will—in dealing with the North Korean issue. But we got—we're amply suited to deal with a lot of different theaters. But we're constantly watching. That's the job of the Joint Chiefs. Their job is to constantly monitor threats, positioning of troops, capabilities, and they bring them to my attention.

And I think people recognize that obviously—you know, our military is undergoing through a lot of hard work and pressure. But according to them, they feel pretty good about it. And if they feel good about it, so do I.

Yes, sir.

U.S. Foreign Policy

Q. Good morning, Mr. President. My name is Captain Norcross. I'm a family physician here, and I wanted to say, thank you for your support for our military. I wanted to ask you your thoughts about our hospital ships that we've had. We had good success with the *Mercy* over in Indonesia, and also pretty soon, we're going to be having the *Comfort* now in deployment. I'd like to ask your thoughts about using these humanitarian missions as a way to fight the global war on terror.

The President. Yes, thank you very much. Our foreign policy is much more than the use of the military. I know the focus is on the military; it's, like, on TV everyday. I understand that. And that's normal during a time of combat. But our foreign policy is much broader than the use of military. You bring up the Navy ships—*Comfort*, for example, is just—saving lives in South America and Central America. I remember going to see—Laura and I went to Guatemala. And we went to this remote region and ran into some military docs and nurses that were just providing essential health care. It's really effective diplomacy to help a mom deal with a child's sickness. And we do a lot of it. We get no credit for it, but we do a lot of it.

Our HIV/AIDS initiative on the continent of Africa—first of all, I believe to whom much is given, much is required. We've been given a lot in the United States. It's in our interests, it's in our moral interests to help deal with the pandemic on the continent of Africa and elsewhere—some in our neighborhood, like Haiti, for example.

It's in our strategic interest to do so as well, because one of the lessons of this conflict we're in is that how people live matters as to whether or not the enemy is able to recruit. If you live in a society full of despair and hopelessness, it is more likely that you would become a suicide bomber or be swayed by an ideology that is really grim. Desperation is what these people prey on.

And therefore, it's up to the United States, with our allies, by the way, to deal with desperate situations. I happen to believe that encouraging people and helping people to live in a free society is essential to our long-term security. I think that it is imperative that we have confidence in the ability of liberty to be a transforming agent for peace.

I worry about isolationism in America. I worry about the struggle—which is going to take awhile—will cause us to lose our confidence in the ability to help others realize the blessings of liberty. I told you earlier, I believe in the universality of freedom. It is a principle by which I have made decisions. I believe—I personally believe there is an Almighty, and I believe a gift of the Almighty to each man, woman, and child on the face

of the Earth is freedom. That's what I believe.

And I have read a lot of history, as have you. I share the story about my friend Prime Minister Koizumi, the former Prime Minister of Japan. I marvel at the fact—or I used to marvel at the fact that my dad fought the Japanese as a United States Navy fighter pilot, and his son sits down at the table to work to keep the peace. It's an amazing—to me it's an amazing irony—I guess is the best way to describe that—that a fellow's father fought him, and I'm working to keep peace. We had no stronger ally—and we still have a strong ally in Prime Minister Abe, by the way, from Japan—but no stronger ally in recognizing that democracy is the long-term solution to defeating this ideological enemy. And Japan, our former enemy, was making sacrifices in Iraq and helping in Afghanistan.

We've got no stronger ally in working to peacefully solve the North Korean nuclear issue than Japan. And it is—something happened between when H.W. Bush was flying torpedo bombers and W. was in the White House. And what happened was, Japan changed its form of government. Liberty has got the capacity to change enemies to allies. And the fundamental question facing this country was, will we recognize that as we head into the 21st century? Do we care what life is like around the world, or are we going to hope for the best?

I care about what life is like around the world, and so should America. And therefore, we ought to worry when people live under the thumb of a tyrant. Our foreign policy for years in the Middle East was stability. What mattered most was stability; it was, are things stable? That, however, created conditions that enabled a group of killers to recruit people to come and kill us. And therefore, I changed our foreign policy in the Middle East to promote liberty as the great alternative to tyranny and a dark vision.

Now, we're going to be kinetic if we need to be to protect ourselves. I've told you, we're going to stay on the offense and keep the pressure on them. But the long-term solution as to whether or not your grandkids can live in a peaceful world is whether or not we encourage liberty to take root around the Mid-

dle East, in particular. And people say, well, they can't possibly—you know, that's not going to work.

Well, I suspect if you look back at history, they might have been somewhat suspect if someone would have predicted an American President would be sitting down keeping the peace with the Japanese Prime Minister at some point—particularly after World War II.

I think it's going to be very important for our country to have faith in the capacity of liberty to be transformative. Some say that's—you know, he's a hopeless idealistic guy. Well, I think it's realistic to understand that this is a long-term struggle and alternative ideologies need to be promoted, one particularly based upon hope; that's worked every time when given a chance to take root.

That's not a seersucker suit, is it? [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President—

The President. It's coming back, yes. They're coming back.

Q. I'm—[*inaudible*]*—*Campos from Colombia.

The President. From?

Q. Colombia, class of 1979.

The President. Okay. *Si.* Thank you, sir.

Free Trade/Spread of Democracy

Q. First of all, I want to thank you for the support you are giving our country. And you have—we know that your main goal is to win the situation in Iraq. I want to ask you, which is your assessment for the situation in South America?

The President. *Si*, thank you. First, I am a big admirer of *mi amigo Presidente Uribe*. He's strong—that's the President of Colombia. [*Laughter*] He's strong; he's courageous; and he believes in democracy. And he was—he started off in a—with a really very tough problem, and that is dealing with a very rich group of people who are violent, who didn't necessarily agree with democracy. And I admire the way he has led his nation.

A key moment in our relations with Colombia will be coming up pretty soon. And that is, we negotiated a free trade agreement with your country. Why? Well, one, we did it because it's in our economic interests to open up markets for U.S. goods and services, just like it's in Colombia's economic interests

to open up our markets for goods and services.

I believe in trade. I believe trade is in the interests of our workers. I think more markets—listen, we’re 5 percent of the people. That means 95 percent of the market should be available to our goods and services. When you’re good at something, you ought to make it easier to sell it. We’re good farmers; we ought to be selling our crops overseas to the extent they’re not needed here at home. We’re good manufacturers of a lot of products; we ought to be selling them.

I also believe that trade is the best way to lift people out of poverty. When there’s commerce, when there’s activity, when there’s enterprise, a society has a better chance of enabling its people to realize dreams. So I’m a big trader, a freetrader.

And that’s why we worked with the agreement with Colombia. Now the Congress is going to have an opportunity to determine whether or not they’re going to be protectionist in nature and whether or not they’ll turn—this country will turn its back on our friend or not.

The freetrader vote has got a lot of strategic implications because in the neighborhood, there is a person who is undermining a democracy, and therefore, we need to be concerned about the loss of democracies in our neighborhood. Democracies yield peace. They don’t war against each other. And when we see a democracy being undermined—and I think it’s going to be in the interests for the United States to work with friends in the neighborhood to promote the institutions necessary to prevent individuals from undermining a free society. What does that mean—free media, the right to dissent, the capacity to have open elections.

And so I’ve got good relations with a lot of the leaders in the neighborhood. And we’re working very closely with Brazil, for example, on a lot of initiatives, starting with the biodiesel initiative. It’s an interesting initiative, by the way. That has got—that initiative is all done because of national security interests and economic security interests as well as environmental concerns. And Brazil makes a lot of ethanol, and we’re beginning to make a lot of ethanol. It’s in our interests to share technologies, to promote others so

we become less dependent on oil—I’m skipping around here.

My only point to you is that good relations with Brazil are necessary to work—to make sure our neighborhood remains a peaceful place based upon the form of government. There’s only one non-democracy in our neighborhood; that’s Cuba. And I strongly believe the people of Cuba ought to live in a free society. It’s in our interests that Cuba become free, and it’s in the interests of the Cuban people that they don’t have to live under an antiquated form of government that has just been repressive.

So we’ll continue to press for freedom on the island of Cuba. One day, the good Lord will take Fidel Castro away and then the question—[laughter]—no, no, no—then the question is, what will be the approach of the U.S. Government? My attitude is, is that we need to use the opportunity to call the world together to promote democracy as the alternative to the form of government they have been living with.

You’ll see an interesting debate. Some will say, all that matters is stability, which, in my judgment, will just simply reinforce the followers of the current regime. I think we ought to be pressing hard for democracy.

I went overseas recently to the Czech Republic and gave a speech on democracy. I saw Vaclav Havel. You might remember him; he was the leader of the Velvet Revolution that helped lead Eastern Europe to a new form of government and—new forms of government. And he’s very much interested in the United States’ attitude toward Cuba because he believes we need to be promoting freedom before stability.

It’s going to be an interesting challenge for our country. We’re working, by the way—back to your question, can we do more than one thing at one time—we’re working very closely with the Navy and Coast Guard to make sure that there is not any issues when it comes between the United States and Cuba, should there be a—or when there is a transition.

Anyway, thanks for the question. I think I am somewhat concerned by the fact that—you know, a lot of our rhetoric is geared toward the Middle East and Africa and that people in the neighborhood say, “Well, the

United States is not paying attention, nor do they care about us.” That’s just simply not the case. In my recent trip down there, I did go to Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, and Central America and emphasized our humanitarian programs, the health programs, the education programs. I wanted to make it clear to the people of South and Central America that the United States cares deeply about the human condition and that we believe that on the one hand, our Government aid ought to make sure that we battle corruption—we just don’t give money to corrupt societies, that we ought to say that in return for our aid, change your habits if you’re corrupt, otherwise you’re not going to get additional money.

And at the same time, we believe we ought to foster programs aimed at the individual. And it’s—and we are. We’re spending a lot of money in South America. Now, we’re not doing a very good job with the propaganda battle around the world. We created it, and we’re losing. And that’s one thing we’ve got to spend a lot of time on, is to make sure that the image of the United States corresponds to the realities on the ground.

Yesterday I went to a mosque—or Islamic Center in Washington, DC. It’s the 50th anniversary of the Islamic Center. It was a place where Dwight Eisenhower went to dedicate, and I went to rededicate it. And my message was, one, freedom is a beautiful thing, and that we expect societies to work toward freedom, and we want to do that. And at the same time, we honor all religion. That’s what we do in America. And it is really meant to counter this notion that somehow America is in war against Islam. We’re not. We’re at war against killers who subvert a great religion in order to achieve their political objectives. And we’ll keep working as hard as we can.

Anyway, great question. Look, I’ve got to go. I thank you all for coming by. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:22 a.m. at Connelly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Donald L. Carcieri of Rhode Island; Rear Adm. Jacob L. Shuford, president, Naval War College; Gov. M. Jodi Rell of Connecticut; Gov. Mark Sanford of South Carolina; Gov. Matt Blunt of Missouri; Lt. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, USA, commander, Multi-National Corps—Iraq; Prime Min-

ister Nuri al-Maliki, Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji, and Minister of the Interior Jawad al-Bulani of Iraq; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; Adm. William J. Fallon, USN, commander, U.S. Central Command; President Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba; and former President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic.

Remarks on the Senate’s Failure to Pass Immigration Reform Legislation in Newport

June 28, 2007

I thank the Members of the Senate and members of my administration who worked so hard on the border security and immigration reform bill. I’m sorry the Senate was unable to reach agreement on the bill this morning.

Legal immigration is one of the top concerns of the American people, and Congress’s failure to act on it is a disappointment. The American people understand the status quo is unacceptable when it comes to our immigration laws. A lot of us worked hard to see if we couldn’t find common ground, and it didn’t work.

Congress really needs to prove to the American people that it can come together on hard issues. The Congress needs to work on comprehensive energy policy and good health care, making sure health care is affordable without inviting the Federal Government to run the health care system. We’ve got to work together to make sure we can balance this Federal budget and not overspend or raise taxes on the American people. We’ve got a lot of work to do.

When they come back from the summer—from the July recess, before the summer break begins, we’ll be focusing on the appropriations process. And I look forward to working with Congress to balance our budgets and to be wise about how we spend the people’s money.

Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:38 p.m. in Connelly Hall at the Naval War College. In his remarks, he referred to S. 1639. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Statement on the Removal of the
Bald Eagle From the List of
Endangered Species**

June 28, 2007

I am pleased that the bald eagle—our Nation’s symbol for more than 225 years and an image of inspiration and freedom to all Americans—is now being removed from the list of endangered species.

Forty years ago, only 400 nesting pairs were living. Today, nearly 10,000 nesting pairs are thriving in the lower 48 States. This number is more than triple the recovery goal set in the Endangered Species Act.

The overwhelming success of bald eagle recovery was made possible by a strong partnership between Federal and State governments and private landowners. The eagle will continue to flourish under Federal protection through the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

This great conservation achievement means more and more Americans across the Nation will enjoy the thrill of seeing bald eagles soar. What a wonderful way to celebrate this Fourth of July.

**Proclamation 8157—To Modify
Duty-Free Treatment Under the
Generalized System of Preferences,
Take Certain Actions Under the
African Growth and Opportunity Act,
and for Other Purposes**

June 28, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

1. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “1974 Act”) (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)), beneficiary developing countries, except those designated as least-developed beneficiary developing countries or beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries as provided in section 503(c)(2)(D) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(D)), are subject to competitive need limitations on the preferential treatment afforded under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to eligible articles.

2. Section 503(c)(2)(C) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(C)) provides that a country that is no longer treated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to an eligible article may be redesignated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to such article if imports of such article from such country did not exceed the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act during the preceding calendar year.

3. Section 503(c)(2)(F)(i) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)(i)) provides that the President may disregard the competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)(i)(II)) with respect to any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country if the aggregate appraised value of the imports of such article into the United States during the preceding calendar year does not exceed an amount set forth in section 503(c)(2)(F)(ii) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)(ii)).

4. Pursuant to section 503(d)(1) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)(1)), the President may waive the application of the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)) with respect to any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country if certain conditions are met.

5. Pursuant to section 503(d)(5) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)(5)), any waiver granted under section 503(d) shall remain in effect until the President determines that such waiver is no longer warranted due to changed circumstances.

6. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that in 2006 certain beneficiary developing countries have exported certain eligible articles in quantities exceeding the applicable competitive need limitation, and I therefore terminate the duty-free treatment for such articles from such beneficiary developing countries.

7. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(C) of the 1974 Act, and subject to the considerations set forth in sections 501 and 502 of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2461 and 2462), I have determined to redesignate certain countries as beneficiary developing countries with respect to certain eligible articles that previously had been imported in quantities exceeding the

competitive need limitations of section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act.

8. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(F) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that the competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the 1974 Act should be disregarded with respect to certain eligible articles from certain beneficiary developing countries.

9. Pursuant to section 503(d)(1) of the 1974 Act, I have received the advice of the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) on whether any industries in the United States are likely to be adversely affected by such waivers, and I have determined, based on that advice and on the considerations described in sections 501 and 502(c) of the 1974 Act, and after giving great weight to the considerations in section 503(d)(2) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)(2)), that such waivers are in the national economic interest of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that the competitive need limitations of section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act should be waived with respect to certain eligible articles from certain beneficiary developing countries.

10. Pursuant to section 503(d)(5) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that certain previously granted waivers of the competitive need limitations of section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act are no longer warranted due to changed circumstances.

11. Section 506A(a)(1) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2466a(a)(1)), as added by section 111(a) of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (title I of Public Law 106–200)(AGOA), authorizes the President to designate a country listed in section 107 of the AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3706) as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country if the President determines that the country meets the eligibility requirements set forth in section 104 of the AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3703), as well as the eligibility criteria set forth in section 502 of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462).

12. Section 104 of the AGOA authorizes the President to designate a country listed in section 107 of the AGOA as an eligible sub-Saharan African country if the President determines that the country meets certain eligibility requirements.

13. Section 112(c) of the AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3721(c)) provides special rules for certain apparel articles imported from lesser developed beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries.

14. In Proclamation 7970 of December 22, 2005, I determined that the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (Mauritania) was not making continual progress in meeting the requirements described in section 506A(a)(1) of the 1974 Act and terminated the designation of Mauritania as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country for purposes of section 506A of the 1974 Act.

15. Pursuant to section 104 of the AGOA and section 506A(a)(1) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that Mauritania now meets the eligibility requirements set forth or referenced therein, and I have decided to redesignate Mauritania as an eligible sub-Saharan African country and beneficiary sub-Saharan African country.

16. I further determine that Mauritania satisfies the criterion for treatment as a “lesser developed beneficiary sub-Saharan African country” under section 112(c) of the AGOA.

17. Presidential Proclamation 8114 of March 19, 2007, implemented section 112 of the AGOA, as amended in section 6002 of the Africa Investment Incentive Act of 2006 (Division D, Title VI, Public Law 109–432)(19 U.S.C. 3721(c)(2)(A)). Technical corrections to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) are necessary to implement the intended tariff treatment.

18. In Presidential Proclamation 8097 of December 29, 2006, I modified the HTS, pursuant to section 1206 of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (the “1988 Act”) (19 U.S.C. 3006), to conform it to the International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (the “Convention”). Additional conforming changes to the HTS are required to implement the intended tariff treatment.

19. Section 2004(b)(1)(B) of the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–429) amended section 213(b)(2)(A)(v) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703(b)(2)(A)(v)). A modification to the HTS needs to be made to reflect this amendment.

20. On April 22, 1985, the United States entered into the Agreement on the Establishment of a Free Trade Area between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Israel (the “Israel FTA”), which the Congress approved in the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985 (the “Israel FTA Act”)(19 U.S.C. 2112 note). In order to maintain the general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions with respect to agricultural trade with Israel, on July 27, 2004, the United States entered into an agreement with Israel concerning certain aspects of trade in agricultural products during the period January 1, 2004, through December 31, 2008 (the “2004 Agreement”).

21. Presidential Proclamation 7826 of October 4, 2004, implemented the 2004 Agreement. Technical corrections to the HTS are necessary to reflect the tariff treatment intended under the 2004 Agreement for the years 2007 and 2008.

22. Section 604 of the 1974 Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of the relevant provisions of that Act, and of other Acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder, including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including but not limited to title V and section 604 of the 1974 Act, section 4 of the Israel FTA Act, section 1206 of the 1988 Act, and section 104 of the AGOA, do hereby proclaim: (1) In order to provide that one or more countries that have not been treated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to one or more eligible articles should be redesignated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to such article or articles for purposes of the GSP, and, in order to provide that one or more countries should no longer be treated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to one or more eligible articles for purposes of the GSP, general note 4(d) to the HTS is modified as set forth in section A of Annex I to this proclamation.

(2) In order to designate certain articles as eligible articles for purposes of the GSP when imported from any beneficiary developing country, the Rates of Duty 1-Special subcolumn for such HTS subheadings is modified as set forth in section B(1) of Annex I to this proclamation.

(3) In order to provide that one or more countries should not be treated as beneficiary developing countries with respect to certain eligible articles for purposes of the GSP, the Rates of Duty 1-Special subcolumn for such HTS subheadings is modified as set forth in section B(2) of Annex I to this proclamation.

(4) The competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the 1974 Act is disregarded with respect to the eligible articles in the HTS subheadings and to the beneficiary developing countries listed in Annex II to this proclamation.

(5) A waiver of the application of section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act shall apply to the eligible articles in the HTS subheadings and to the beneficiary developing countries set forth in Annex III to this proclamation.

(6) The waivers of the application of section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act to the articles in the HTS subheading and to the beneficiary developing countries listed in Annex IV to this proclamation are revoked.

(7) Mauritania is designated as an eligible sub-Saharan African country and as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country.

(8) In order to reflect this designation in the HTS, general note 16(a) to the HTS is modified by inserting in alphabetical sequence in the list of beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries “Islamic Republic of Mauritania,” effective with respect to articles entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after July 1, 2007.

(9) For purposes of section 112(c) of the AGOA, Mauritania is a lesser developed beneficiary sub-Saharan African country.

(10) In order to provide the tariff treatment intended under section 112 of the AGOA, as amended, the HTS is modified as set forth in section A of Annex V to this proclamation.

(11) In order to conform the HTS to the Convention or any amendment thereto recommended for adoption, to promote the uniform application of the Convention, to establish additional subordinate tariff categories, and to make technical and conforming changes to existing provisions, the HTS is modified as set forth in section B of Annex V to this proclamation.

(12) In order to implement section 2004(b)(1)(B) of the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2004, the HTS is modified as set forth in section C of Annex V to this proclamation.

(13) In order to provide the tariff treatment intended under the 2004 Agreement, the HTS is modified as set forth in section D of Annex V to this proclamation.

(14) The modifications to the HTS set forth in Annexes I, IV, and V to this proclamation shall be effective with respect to articles entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after the dates set forth in the respective annex.

(15) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:30 a.m., June 28, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation and its attached annex were published in the *Federal Register* on June 29.

Memorandum on Assignment of Reporting Function

June 28, 2007

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Assignment of Reporting Function

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby assign to you the reporting function conferred upon the President by section 9003(d)(3) of title 5, United States Code.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., June 29, 2007]

NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on July 2.

Proclamation 8158—Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Persons Responsible for Policies and Actions That Threaten Lebanon's Sovereignty and Democracy

June 28, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In order to foster democratic institutions in Lebanon, to help the Lebanese people preserve their sovereignty and achieve their aspirations for democracy and regional stability, and to end the sponsorship of terrorism in Lebanon, it is in the interest of the United States to restrict the international travel, and to suspend the entry into the United States, as immigrants or non-immigrants, of aliens who deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, or benefit from policies or actions that do so, including through

the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence and intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, 8 U.S.C. 1182(f), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, hereby find that the unrestricted immigrant and nonimmigrant entry into the United States of persons described in section 1 of this proclamation would, except as provided for in sections 2 and 3 of this proclamation, be detrimental to the interests of the United States.

I therefore hereby proclaim that:

Section 1. The entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of the following aliens is hereby suspended:

(a) Lebanese government officials, former Lebanese government officials, and private persons who deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon;

(b) Syrian government officials, former Syrian government officials, and persons who meet the criteria for designation under section 3(a)(i) or (ii) of Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, who deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon;

(c) Persons in Lebanon who act on behalf of, or actively promote the interests of, Syrian government officials by deliberately undermining or harming Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon;

(d) Persons who, through their business dealings with any of the persons described in subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this section, derive significant financial benefit from, or materially support, policies or actions that deliberately undermine or harm Lebanon's sovereignty, its legitimate government, or its democratic institutions, or contribute to the breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through the sponsorship of terrorism, politically motivated violence or intimidation, or the reassertion of Syrian control in Lebanon; and

(e) The spouses and dependent children of persons described in subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) of this section.

Sec. 2. Section 1 of this proclamation shall not apply with respect to any person otherwise covered by section 1 where entry of such person would not be contrary to the interests of the United States.

Sec. 3. Persons covered by section 1 or 2 of this proclamation shall be identified by the Secretary of State or the Secretary's designee, in his or her sole discretion, pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary may establish under section 5 of this proclamation.

Sec. 4. Nothing in this proclamation shall be construed to derogate from U.S. Government obligations under applicable international agreements.

Sec. 5. The Secretary of State shall have responsibility for implementing this proclamation pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary, in the Secretary's sole discretion, may establish.

Sec. 6. This proclamation is effective immediately. It shall remain in effect until such time as the Secretary of State determines that it is no longer necessary and should be terminated, either in whole or in part. Any such determination by the Secretary of State shall be published in the *Federal Register*.

Sec. 7. This proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any right, benefit, or privilege, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven,

and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:52 a.m., July 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 29, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 3.

Executive Order 13437—Waiver Under the Trade Act of 1974 With Respect to Turkmenistan

June 28, 2007

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 402(c)(2) and (d) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the “Act”)(19 U.S.C. 2432(c)(2) and (d)), and having made the report to the Congress set forth in section 402(c)(2), I hereby waive the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act with respect to Turkmenistan.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 28, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., July 2, 2007]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of Press Secretary on June 29, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 3.

Presidential Determination Under Section 402(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974—Turkmenistan

June 28, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007–24

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination Under Section 402(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974—Turkmenistan

Pursuant to section 402(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–618), as

amended (the “Act”), I determine that a waiver by Executive Order of the application of subsections (a) and (b) of section 402 of the Act with respect to Turkmenistan will substantially promote the objectives of section 402.

On my behalf, please transmit this determination to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to the President of the Senate.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 29.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Waiver on the Extension of Normal Trade Relations Status for Turkmenistan

June 28, 2007

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit the document referred to in subsection 402(c)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, with respect to a waiver of the application of subsections 402(a) and (b) of that Act to Turkmenistan.

I report in that document my determination that such a waiver will substantially promote the objectives of section 402. I have instructed the Secretary of State to provide a copy of that determination to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate. The report also indicates that I have received assurances with respect to the emigration practices of Turkmenistan required by section 402(c)(2)(B) of the Act.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 29.

Presidential Determination To Waive Military Coup-Related Provision of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006, as Carried Forward Under the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, With Respect to Pakistan

June 28, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007-23

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination to Waive Military Coup-Related Provision of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006, as carried forward under the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, with respect to Pakistan

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 534(j) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006 (the "Act") (Public Law 109-102), as carried forward under the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (Public Law 110-5) (the "Continuing Resolution"), and Public Law 107-57, as amended, I hereby determine and certify, with respect to Pakistan, that a waiver of section 508 of the Act, as carried forward under the Continuing Resolution:

- (a) would facilitate the transition to democratic rule in Pakistan; and
- (b) is important to United States efforts to respond to, deter, or prevent acts of international terrorism.

Accordingly, I hereby waive, with respect to Pakistan, section 508 of such Act, as carried forward by the Continuing Resolution.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 29.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2007

June 29, 2007

I send greetings to Americans everywhere celebrating Independence Day.

Two hundred thirty-one years ago, 56 brave men signed their names to a bold creed of freedom that set the course of our Nation and changed the history of the world. On this anniversary, we remember the great courage and conviction of our Founders, and we celebrate the enduring principles of our Declaration of Independence.

Through selfless sacrifice and unrelenting determination, the patriots of the American Revolution ensured that our Nation's claim to liberty and equality would not be dismissed or forgotten. The ideals they fought for and the country they helped establish are lasting symbols of hope to the entire world.

Our commitment to America's founding truths remains steadfast. We believe that freedom is a blessing from the Almighty and the birthright of every man and woman. As our Nation faces new challenges, we are answering history's call with confidence that our legacy of freedom will always prevail. On Independence Day, we express our gratitude to the generations of courageous Americans who have defended us and those who continue to serve in our country's hour of need, and we celebrate the liberty that makes America a light to the nations.

Laura and I wish you a Happy Fourth of July. May God bless you, and may He bless our wonderful country.

George W. Bush

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary released a Spanish language version of this message. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

June 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

June 24

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush attended the Ford's Theatre Gala, where he made remarks for television broadcast at a later date.

June 25

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Situation Room, he had a video teleconference with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

In the afternoon, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President had a working lunch with President Toomas Ilves of Estonia.

June 26

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he participated in an interview with Bill Sammon of the Washington Examiner.

The President announced his intention to nominate Scott M. Burns to be Deputy Director of National Drug Control Policy.

The President announced his intention to nominate W. Ross Ashley III to be an Assistant Administrator (Grant Programs) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gen. Wayne A. Downing, USA (Ret.), as a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint R. Todd Gardenhire, Paul Clinton Harris, Sr., and Richard A. Manka as members of the Advisory Committee to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

The President announced his intention to designate Craig W. Duehring as Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs).

June 27

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the South Lawn, the President participated in an interview with Hannah Storm of CBS News "The Early Show." Later, in the Rose Garden, he participated in a photo opportunity with the NCAA women's softball champion University of Arizona Wildcats.

June 28

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to North Kingstown, RI, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Sherrill Estes.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Newport, RI. While en route aboard Marine One, he took an aerial tour of Tall Ships Rhode Island 2007 in Newport Harbor.

In the afternoon, the President met with family members of military personnel killed in the war on terror. Later, he traveled to the Bush family home in Kennebunkport, ME.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher Egan to be the Representative of the United States of America to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald B. Marron to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brent T. Wahlquist to be Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement at the Department of the Interior.

June 29

In the morning, the President was briefed by National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley concerning the attempted terrorist bombings in London, England. He then had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President was briefed by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Frances Fragos Townsend for further briefings on the situation in London.

The President announced that he has nominated Paul J. Hutter to be General Counsel at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The President announced that he has nominated Thomas M. Beck to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority and, upon appointment, to designate him as Chair.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding from June 16–18.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted June 25

Jim Nussle,
of Iowa, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, vice Robert J. Portman.

Withdrawn June 25

William W. Mercer,
of Montana, to be Associate Attorney General, vice Robert D. McCallum, Jr., which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

Submitted June 27

W. Ross Ashley III,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security (new position).

Scott M. Burns,
of Utah, to be Deputy Director of National Drug Control Policy, vice Mary Ann Solberg, resigned.

George A. Krol,
of New Jersey, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Coun-

selor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Turkmenistan.

Reed Charles O'Connor,
of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, vice A. Joe Fish, retiring.

Submitted June 28

Christopher Egan,
of Massachusetts, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with the rank of Ambassador.

Reed Verne Hillman,
of Massachusetts, to be U.S. Marshal for the District of Massachusetts for the term of 4 years, vice Anthony Dichio.

Donald B. Marron,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Matthew Slaughter, resigned.

Brent T. Wahlquist,
of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, vice Jeffrey D. Jarrett.

Thomas M. Beck,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term expiring July 29, 2012, vice Dale Cabaniss, term expiring.

Paul J. Hutter,
of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, vice Tim S. McClain, resigned.

Withdrawn June 28

John Ray Correll,
of Indiana, to be Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, vice Jeffrey D. Jarrett, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

Dale Cabaniss,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of 5 years expiring July 29, 2012 (reappointment), which was sent to the Senate on March 12, 2007.

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released June 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Joel Kaplan on immigration reform

Fact sheet: Only Enforcing Our Ineffective Current Law Leaves the Nation Vulnerable

Fact sheet: No Child Left Behind: Keeping a Historic Commitment to Our Children

Released June 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary on immigration reform

Released June 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O.

Leavitt and National Economic Council Director Allan B. Hubbard on health care

Fact sheet: Strengthening Our Friendship With the Muslim Community Worldwide

Fact sheet: Bipartisan Border Security and Immigration Reform Bill

Released June 28

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by senior administration officials on the President's executive privilege

Fact sheet: The New Way Forward in Iraq: An Update

Released June 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Tony Snow

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Texas

**Acts Approved
by the President**

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.